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AUTHOR:

HORACE

TITLE:

HORACE'S LIFE AND
CHARACTER

PLACE:

LONDON

DATE:

1877

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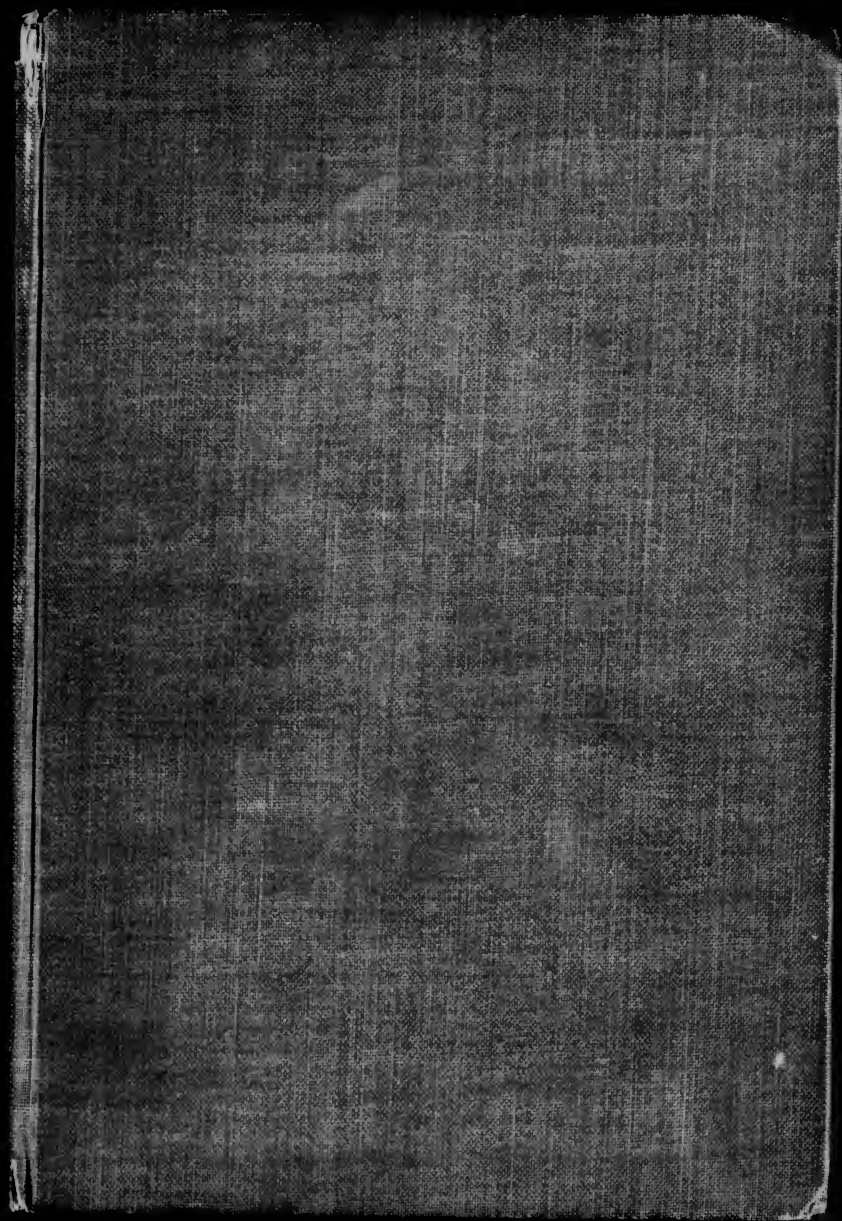
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HORACE'S LIFE AND CHARACTER.



HORACE'S
LIFE AND CHARACTER.

AN EPITOME OF HIS SATIRES AND EPISTLES.

London: Macmillan & Co.

BY

R. M. HOVENDEN, B.A.

AUTHOR OF A METRICAL PARAPHRASE OF THE ODES OF HORACE.

London :

MACMILLAN AND CO.

1877

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87H3
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Cambridge:

PRINTED BY C. J. CLAY, M.A.
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I, in the fashion of Lucilius,
Our better, love to write in measured verse.
Whether affairs went well or ill with him,
He to his books, safe friends, entrusted all
His secrets, thus the old man's life is shown
As in a votive tablet to the world.

HORACE'S *Satires*, Book II. Sat. I. ll. 28—33.

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CONTENTS.

FIRST BOOK OF SATIRES.

	PAGE
I. TANTALUS	3
III. UNCHARITABLE JUDGMENTS	8
IV. A PLEA FOR SATIRE	13
V. A JOURNEY FROM ROME TO BRUNDISIUM	19
VI. THE FREEDMAN'S SON	24
IX. A KIND OF BURR	31

SECOND BOOK OF SATIRES.

I. A CONSULTATION	38
II. HOMESPUN PHILOSOPHY	44
III. DAMASIPPUS THE STOIC	51
VI. TOWN AND COUNTRY	58
VII. PLAYING WITH EDGE-TOOLS	65

FIRST BOOK OF EPISTLES.

	PAGE
I. To MÆCENAS	73
II. To LOLLIUS	79
III. To JULIUS FLORUS	83
IV. To ALBIUS TIBULLUS	86
V. To MANLIUS TORQUATUS	88
VII. To MÆCENAS	91
VIII. To CELSUS ALBINOVANUS	97
IX. To CLAUDIUS NERO	99
X. To FUSCUS ARISTIUS	100
XI. To BULLATIUS	103
XIII. To VINIUS ASELLA	105
XIV. To HIS FARM-BAILIFF	107
XVI. To QUINCTIUS	110
XVII. To SCÆVA	115
XIX. To MÆCENAS	119
XX. To HIS BOOK	122

SECOND BOOK OF EPISTLES.

I. To AUGUSTUS	127
II. To JULIUS FLORUS	142

EPISTLE TO THE PISOS.

ON THE ART OF POETRY	157
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HORACE'S SATIRES.

BOOK I.

I.

TANTALUS.

WHY do we always grumble at the life
Shaped out for us by choice or circumstance,
And envy the pursuits of other men?
Fortunate merchants! cries the veteran,
Maim'd and disabled by the toils of war. 5
Again, the merchant, storm-tost in his ship:
Warfare is better! Lo! within the hour
Comes sudden death or joyful victory.
The lawyer fain would be a country-squire
When at cock-crow a client knocks him up: 10

10 Epp. 11. 1. l. 103.

The squire, sub-pœna'd to appear in court,
 Vows there is nothing like a city-life.
 With instances enough to weary out
 The tongue of Fabius: not to weary you,
 Hear my conclusion. If some God should say:
 Behold, I grant your prayers: Soldier, be thou
 Merchant; thou, lawyer, agriculturist;
 Act your new parts on this side and on that;
 Away!—They will not, when they may, be blest.
 Were it not just and right if angry Jove
 Vow'd he would play no more the easy god
 Thereafter, giving ear to their desires?

Now, lest the whole thing seem an empty jest—
 Though jest may often wisely blend with truth,
 As kindly teachers tempt an idle child
 With sugar-plums to learn his accidence—
 Joking apart, see how the matter stands:
 The man, whose coulter turns the heavy soil,
 The soldier, and the storm-tost mariner,
 The crafty huckster, all alike pretend
 They toil to make provision for old age,

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When they will take their ease, like as the ant,
 Pattern of industry, with claw and mouth
 Draws grain by grain and adds it to her heap,
 Far seeing, careful for the time to come. 35
 Yet when Aquarius makes the new year sad,
 She creeps not forth, but wisely uses food
 Amass'd before: whilst you nor summer-heat,
 Nor winter, sword, fire, storm, deter from gain;
 No rest, while any can your riches match. 40
 What profits all your gold and silver store
 For safer keeping buried under ground?—
 Once drawn upon it dwindles to an *as*.—
 If so, what beauty can your treasure boast?
 Though you thresh out a hundred thousand sheaves, 45
 You eat no more than I. Among the slaves,
 He, on whose shoulders weighs the bag of bread,
 Takes equal share with him whose back is free.
 What cares a man of judgment if his teams
 A hundred or a thousand acres plough?— 50
 There's something pleasant in an ample heap.—
 But if our little yields as good a meal,
 Why are your barns extoll'd above our bins?

Wanting a cup or pitcherful, you say : .
 I'd rather draw it from the river's bank 55
 Than from this little spring.—Fierce Aufidus,
 To punish your inordinate desire,
 Whirls bank and you together down the stream :
 But he who only seeks to quench his thirst
 Neither drinks turbid water nor is drown'd. 60

Yet many a man, the slave of greed, replies :
 'Hoard, hoard ! The more you have the more you're worth.'—
 How deal with such ?—Just bid them starve their lives
 Ev'n as they will. They tell of one at Athens,
 Sordid and rich, who to the popular voice 65
 Made answer thus : You hiss me, I applaud
 Myself, when gazing on my wealth at home.—
 Tantalus athirst gasps for the running stream
 That mocks his lip : why laugh ? I fable you,
 Under another name, who gape and sleep 70
 On money-bags enshrined from eyes profane,
 And hold each coin a master-piece of art.
 Know you not money's worth ? What use it serves ?
 Bread it can buy and herbs, a flask of wine,

And much that human nature lacking craves. 75
 A life of ceaseless watching, day and night,
 In dread of thieves, incendiaries, slaves
 Who pilfer and abscond, is this delight ?
 Far better to be poorest of the poor.

* * * * *

III.

UNCHARITABLE JUDGMENTS.

ALL singers have this vice, when ask'd to sing
 Among their friends, they're never in the vein,
 Unask'd they never cease. Tigellius
 Was always so. Cæsar, who might command,
 Pleading his father's friendship and his own,
 Pled in vain. But, when the fit was on,
 From egg to fruit he troll'd his supper-songs,
 Now high now low, through all the gamut's range.
 Eccentric always: swiftly now he ran
 As for his life, now paced like Juno's priest
 In solemn state. One day he had ten slaves,
 The next two hundred; grandly now he talk'd
 Of Kings and Tetrarchs, then of simple fare,
 A shell of salt, a cloak however coarse
 That might suffice to fend him from the cold.
 Yet if you gave a million to this man

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Of simple wants and habits, in five days
 His chest were empty. He outwatch'd the stars
 At night and snored all day: never was man
 So inconsistent. Here one says: 'And you,
 Have you no faults?' 20

'Yes, not so glaring though.'—

When Mænius at absent Novius carp'd,
 'Go to,' men said, 'we know thee, know thyself.'
 'But I absolve myself,' said Mænius.
 Mere self-love this and worthy of all blame. 25
 Why, if so purblind to your own defects,
 Flash like an eagle on your neighbour's faults
 Or Epidaurian serpent? Fear you not
 Lest he may call you to account in turn?
 One may be testy, sensitive to sneers 30
 From men o' the world; perhaps ridiculous
 For hair ill-cut, cloak trailing on the ground,
 And slip-shod feet; yet surely a good man,
 None better; yet your friend; a genius

Rough in externals. Lastly, sift yourself,
 And see if Nature and an evil life
 Have left you free from vice, for weed and fern,
 Doom'd to the fire, grow in neglected fields.

* * * * *

Those who would punish every fault alike
 Fail in their proofs: good sense and morals side
 With fair expedience born of equity. *
 The living things that first crawl'd forth on land,
 Dumb, brutish, fought for acorns and for dens 100
 With nails and fists, then clubs, and so advanced
 To weapons by suggestive practice forged;
 Until they found a tongue to symbolize
 Names, feelings; then the age of war declined,
 Wall'd towns were built, and stringent laws ordain'd 105
 Against all robbers and adulterers.
 For Helen was not first of woman-kind
 To gender war, and many died unknown
 Whom, snatching beast-like at a passing lust,
 The stronger slew, as doth the bull of the herd. 110
 That laws were made in fear of wrong-doers,

35

All times, all annals of the world avouch.
 Just and unjust we cannot separate
 Like good and pleasant from their opposites,
 Nor logic prove that he who steals by night 115
 A neighbour's cabbage-sprouts sins equally
 With one who robs a shrine: we need a rule
 To harmonize offence and penalty,
 Lest cruel scourges take the place of whips.
 No fear have I that you will use a switch 120
 When heavier stripes are due, since you declare
 That petty theft and burglary are one,
 And vow to lop great crimes and small alike,
 When men make you their ruler. If the Sage
 Alone is rich, fair, shoemaker and king, 125
 Why long for what you have?

You know not what
 Chrysippus says: the Sage who neither makes
 Slippers nor shoes is a shoemaker still.—
 How so?—

Just as Hermogenes, though mute,
 Is singer, lyrist; as Alfinius, 130
 When he renounced his art and shut up shop,

Still shoemaker, in every trade the Sage
Is master and so King.—

Rude boys will pluck
Your beard, unless your staff can govern them.
Beset by crowds I see you, burst with rage,
Yelling with pain, O greatest of great Kings.
To cut a long tale short: While you, the King,
Go to your farthing bath, no body-guard
About you, save Crispinus the inept,
I ask the kind indulgence of my friends,
And willingly in turn condone their faults,
Happier in private life than you as King.

135

140

IV.

A PLEA FOR SATIRE.

CRATINUS, Eupolis, Aristophanes,
And others of the early Comic school,
When they would brand a man as vagabond,
Adulterer, bravo, rogue, or otherwise
Notorious, spoke their minds without restraint.
This was Lucilius' vein, who follow'd them,
With feet and numbers changed: a witty man,
Acute, but, as a versifier, harsh.
Faulty in this, that often in an hour,
Standing at ease, he spoke two hundred lines;
The muddy stream brought waifs you cared to save.
Wordy, too idle to improve his verse
In quality, for quantity I care not.

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Crispinus challenged me at heavy odds:

14 Epp. I. 19. l. 43.

'Take we our tablets, name the time and place, 15
 And umpires; see which of us writes the more.'—
 I praise the gods who made me slow of speech
 And unprolific: you may imitate,
 If such your will, the goatskin-bellows' blast
 That works and puffs until the fire subdues 20
 The iron.' Blest is Fannius with his bust
 And testimonials, while no one reads
 The works I fear in public to recite,
 For many like them not, being themselves
 Open to censure. Sift the social throng, 25
 All are the slaves of pride or avarice.
 One covets plate, as Albius dotes on bronze,
 Another hankers for his neighbour's wife,
 A third goes trafficking from east to west
 Borne like a dust-wreath on the eddying wind, 30
 Through dangers oft and hardships of the sea,
 Fearing to lose a chance of greater gains.
 All these dread banter, hate the satirist.
 'His horns are tipp'd,' they say, 'keep clear of him:

To raise a laugh he will not spare a friend, 35
 And boasts that every one, beldam or boy,
 Returning from the bakehouse or the tank,
 Has learnt his doggerel.'

* * * * *

Why should you dread me? 70
 My books on stall or pillar are not thumb'd
 By Hermogen Tigellius and the like.
 I read them but to friends and that perforce,
 Not everywhere to crowds.—

The most recite
 Their verses in mid-forum, at the bath, 75
 Shut places aid the voice.—

The more fools they,
 Devoid of common sense, who cannot choose
 Fit time and place.—

You revel in abuse,
 And cavil of set purpose.—

Whence this stone
 You cast at me? Of those with whom I live, 80
 Who says so? He, who can backbite a friend,

Or slink from him when blamed; who loves to catch
 A foolish laugh and be esteem'd a wit;
 Who keeps no secret; works in calumny;
 That man is base, Roman, beware of him.

85

Oft on three couches sup a dozen guests,
 Of whom one loves to mortify the rest,
 Except the host,—him, too, when many cups
 Have made his tongue the index of his mind.
 You, who denounce all malice, call this man
 Courteous, urbane and frank: let me nickname
 Rufilius, civet-cat, Gorgonius, goat,
 I'm sharp and bitter. If, when you are by,
 Petillius Capitolinus' thefts
 Are mention'd, you defend him on this wise:—
 'I've known Capitolinus from a boy,
 Ask'd and received much favour at his hands,
 Am glad he lives unscathed among us still;
 Yet his acquittal did astonish me:—
 Mere rust and cuttle-fish excretion this.
 If one may dare to answer for himself,
 I promise that my writings and my mind

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Shall not admit such baseness. I may speak
 Frankly, jocosely, so much liberty
 You surely grant. My best of fathers taught me 105
 To brand and to avoid the baser sort.
 When he exhorted me to be content,
 Frugal and simple as became our means,
 'Take warning by the son of Albius,'
 He said, 'or ruin'd Barrus, not to waste 110
 Your patrimony:' he denounced the love
 Of harlots thus: 'Be not Scetanus-like.'
 Or lest I coveted a neighbour's wife:
 'Think into what a snare Trebonius fell.
 Let sophists, if it please them, lecture you 115
 On rules of right and wrong, enough for me,
 The natural guardian of your life and fame,
 To keep you moral as our fathers were.
 When time has strengthen'd you in mind and limb
 Swim without corks.' He train'd my boyhood thus; 120
 And whether he advised me to do well:—
 'You have authority for this,' he said,

107 Sat. 1. 6. l. 82 seqq.

Of the selected judges citing one :
 Or warn'd me from wrong-doing : 'Can you doubt
 If this will injure you, when such and such
 Are put to shame?'— 125

The sick and gluttonous
 Turn to repentance when a neighbour dies,
 So, scandalous examples turn the mind
 From vice, in youth. By this means was I saved
 From deadly sins, though faults of lighter dye, 130
 Which may be pardon'd, held me ; even these
 Time, faithful friends, reflection may correct.
 For always on my bed or in the porch
 I question with myself : Were this not well ?
 Will this course mend my life, or please my friends ? 135
 Such a one acted meanly, and shall I
 Go, and do likewise ? These things I debate,
 Alone, with lips compress'd : when leisure serves,
 Jot down my thoughts :—one of the venial faults
 I own'd but now, which you must overlook 140
 Lest all the band of poets join with me,
 For we are numberless, and, like the Jews,
 Compel you to come over to our side.

V.

A JOURNEY FROM ROME TO BRUNDISIUM.

ARICIA was my first stage out of Rome :
 Inn, moderate : with me Heliodorus came,
 The rhetorician, learnedest of Greeks.
 Thence to Forum-Appi, haunt of pot-house rogues
 And bargemen ; lazily we took two days, 5
 Where brisk folk one :—the Appian way is rough.
 The water being most vile, I fasted here,
 Impatient, waiting while the others supp'd.
 Already night above the shadowy earth
 Was lighting up the skies, when bargemen hurl'd 10
 Abuse on slaves not backward in retort.
 'Bring up, here ! What, three-hundred ? Hold, enough !'
 In taking fares and putting-to the mule
 An hour was lost. Musquitoes and marsh-frogs
 Kept us awake. The drunken steersman sang 15
 His absent mistress, one i' the bows replied.

At length, the second falling off to sleep,
 Our lazy bargeman turn'd the mule to graze,
 Made fast the tow-rope to a stone, and snored.
 At day-break, seeing that our boat lay still,
 Out lept a choleric man, with willow staff
 Belabouring the bargeman and the mule:
 Not till the fourth hour were we put ashore.
 We wash'd our hands and faces in thy fount,
 Feronia, then we lunch'd and crawl'd three miles
 To Anxur, crowning the far-gleaming cliffs.

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Here my Mæcnas and Cocceius
 Were due: ambassadors on great affairs,
 Anxious to bring together friends estranged.
 While I with ointment salved my watery eyes,
 Arrived Mæcnas and Cocceius,
 And with them Capito Fonteius,
 A polish'd man, Antonius' dearest friend.
 We pass'd through Fondi, laughing at the Scribe,
 Luscus, with all his airs of prætor-ship,
 His purple-border'd robe and incense-pan.
 Weary we came at last to Formiæ,

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Lodged at Muræna's, supp'd with Capito.
 Next day, at Sinuessa, joyful day!
 Plotius and Varius with Virgilius came;
 Three souls, the brightest ever born on earth,
 Three souls, for ever dearest to my own.
 Oh! what embraces, what delights were ours!
 No joy exceeds the meeting of such friends.
 A hostel, close to the Campanian bridge
 Housed us, purveyors bringing wood and salt.
 The mules were loosed betimes at Capua,
 Mæcnas went to ball-play, straight to bed
 Virgil and I, dyspeptic, bleary-eyed pair.
 Cocceius' handsome house next harbour'd us,
 Above the Caudian inn. Now briefly sing,
 O Muse, how strove Sarmentus the buffoon
 With Messius Cicirrhus, and the race
 Of either party. Messius of Oscan blood,
 Sarmentus, slave-born. First, Sarmentus cries:
 'Whoa! Unicorn!' We laugh. Then, Messius snorts:
 'Come on!' and shakes his mane.
 'Oh! if your front
 Retain'd its horn what marvels might you do,

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So fierce, though mutilated!' A vile scar
 Furrow'd his shaggy brow. Sarmentus, then,
 With jokes on his Campanian disease
 And ugly face, said:

'Dance the Cyclops' dance:
 You need no mask nor high-heel'd tragic boot.'—
 Cicirrus next: 'Where is the chain you vow'd,
 An offering to the Lares? Though a scribe
 You be, your mistress has not lost her rights.
 Runagate slave! Surely a pound of flour
 Sufficed for one so slender and so small.'—
 In short, our supper pass'd agreeably.
 Next day to Beneventum, where the host,
 Frying lean thrushes, overset the pan,
 And almost burn'd the house down: lambent flames
 Burst from the chimney upwards to the roof.
 You should have seen how guests with servants vied
 To save their supper and put out the fire.

And now Apulia show'd her well-known hills,
 Scorch'd by sirocco; these we clomb with pain,
 Until Trivicum lodged us for the night,

Where faggots green and wet provoked our tears.
 Hence, by fast coach, for four and twenty miles,
 To that small town whose name no metre fits,
 Known by these signs: ditch-water brings a price:
 The bread so fine that practised travellers
 Carry provision of it in their bags,
 For bread, like water, at Canusium fails:
 A town built long ago by Diomede.
 Here mournful Varius left his weeping friends.
 We journey'd wearily to Rubi next,
 The road was heavy with incessant rain.
 Now, though the weather clear'd, the road got worse,
 As far as Barium, redolent of fish.
 Gnatia, the nymph-deserted, woke our mirth,
 Telling how incense on her altar melts
 Spontaneously. A Jew may credit this,
 Not I, who am instructed that the gods
 Lead careless lives; if Nature ever works
 By miracle she gets no aid from them.
 Brundisium ends my paper and my route.

VI.

THE FREED-MAN'S SON.

Not though of all the Lydians who possess'd
 Etruria none are nobler-born than you,
 Mæcenas, nor because your grandfathers,
 Maternal and paternal, held command
 Of many legions, do you look askance,
 As others might, on me the freed-man's son.
 You care not to enquire the parentage
 Of any one, born free, and rightly hold
 That many self-made men of humble birth,
 Before th' ignoble reign of Tullius,
 Both lived with credit and in honour died.
 Whereas Lævinus, of Valerius' blood

1 O. 1. 1. 1. 1.

6 Epp. 1. 20. l. 20.

10 A reign in itself very noble, but ignoble as regards the origin of the King, who was the son of Tarquinius Priscus, Lucumo, by a slave-girl.

CRUQUIUS.

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By whom proud Tarquin was expell'd from Rome,
 Was never priced above a single *as*,
 The people bidding, and you know them well,
 Prone to bestow their votes unworthily,
 Dazzled by busts and titles. How should we,
 So far removed above the vulgar, act?
 If to the new man Decius they prefer
 Lævinus, or if Censor Appius
 Quash my election for defect of birth,
 They but rebuke an ass in lion's skin.

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* * * * *

Returning to myself the freed-man's son,
 Whom they miscal the freed-man's upstart son,
 Now, as your guest, Mæcenas; long ago,
 As tribune of a Roman legion named.
 The two things differ: they may rightly grudge
 My post of honour, but not so my friend,
 Cautious to sift from vulgar flatterers

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45 Epp. 1. 20. l. 20.

48 Horace, at a very early age, held the legionary rank of Tribune in Brutus's army.

A worthy man. I cannot say that luck
 Assisted me in winning such a prize:
 It was no chance at all: Virgilius first,
 And, later, Varius spoke of my deserts. 55
 I came into your presence, told in brief—
 For modesty forbade my speaking much—
 Without the airs of a patrician youth
 Who rides afield on a Calabrian nag,
 Just what I was, and briefly you replied, 60
 As is your wont; and so I took my leave.
 But, nine months after, graciously recall'd,
 I found myself enroll'd among your friends.
 I cling to your esteem, who value men
 Not for great names but for pure heart and life. 65
 And if my nature, blameless on the whole,
 Is fleck'd with some not flagrant blemishes,
 Regard them but as moles on a fair skin.
 If none can lay with justice to my charge
 Greed, meanness, evil haunts, if dear and true 70
 (Bear with self-praise) I live among my friends,
 I owe it to a sire of slender means,
 Who put me not to school with Flavius,

Where lubber-sons of great centurions,
 With bag and tablet dangling from their arms, 75
 Paid duly at the Ides their monthly fees;
 But carried me to Rome, that I might learn
 Those arts which every knight and senator
 Deems fitting for his sons. If any mark'd
 My dress and retinue among the crowd 80
 They would have thought me born to good estate;
 He was himself my watchful pedagogue
 At every class. Enough:—he kept me chaste,
 Prime flower of virtue, not in act alone,
 But free from taint or breath of evil speech; 85
 Nor fear'd lest men should blame him afterwards,
 If as a clerk or auctioneer I plied
 A petty trade; nor had my will rebell'd;
 Yet all the more I owe him gratitude.

I were a fool indeed could I lament 90
 My parentage, urging, as many do,
 That I was not consulted in the choice

75 Epp. 1. 1. 1. 56.

82 Sat. 1. 4. 1. 106, seqq.

Of such a father; heart and tongue revolt
 From such a plea: if it were possible
 For men to live their early years again 95
 And choose their parents for ambition's sake,
 Each at his will, yet I, content with mine,
 Would shrink from chairs of state and fasces; mad
 In the vulgar judgment, sane perhaps in yours,
 That I reject a charge which fits me not. 100
 Expense would eat me out of house and home;
 Mobb'd by acquaintance here, by clients there,
 Until I could not stir abroad alone.
 A string of slaves and horses must be fed,
 Carriages hired. Now go I, as I list, 105
 Even to Tarentum on a well-clipp'd mule,
 My saddle-bags behind, myself in front;
 None jeer at me, O Tullius, as at you;
 Your prætor-ship's equipment for the road

106 The mules in Spain, as in the East, have their coats closely shorn or clipp'd. This process of shearing is found to keep the beast cooler and freer from cutaneous disorders. Their clipping recalls the 'mulus curtus' on which Horace could amble even to Tarentum.

FORD'S *Gatherings from Spain*, Ch. VII.
 He travelled, too, with *alforjas* behind him.

Five slaves, *chaise-percée*, and a skin of wine. 110
 In this, in all, illustrious Senator,
 My life eclipses yours. I stroll about,
 Here, there, enquire the price of flour and herbs;
 Sometimes at night-fall, to the Forum go
 Or Circus, haunts of fortune-telling cheats, 115
 Then saunter home to sup on leeks, pulse, cakes,
 Served by three slaves; a marble slab sustains
 My ewer with three cups; a salt-cellar,
 Cruet and saucer of Campanian ware.
 I go to bed, not haunted by the thought 120
 That I must stand, at dawn, by Marsyas
 Who glares down on the younger Novius.
 I lie till four; then walk, or write and read
 As fancy prompts; anoint myself with oil,
 Not such as Natta filches from the lamps; 125
 And when the hot sun drives me to the bath
 I quit my ball-play at the triangle;

121 The statue of Marsyas, flay'd alive by Apollo, stood in front of the Rostra, and near it lawyers and commercial men met to transact business. Horace says, jocularly, that Marsyas cannot bear the sight of the younger Novius, who was an usurious skin-flint. The place took its name from the statue.
 CRUQUIUS' *Old Commentator*.

Then, having eaten just enough to stay
 My stomach's craving, take my ease at home.
 Thus live I, from ambition's bondage free,
 Happier than if a Quæstorship were made
 Hereditary in my father's house.

130

IX.

A KIND OF BURR*.

SAUNTERING as usual in the Sacred Way,
 Absorbed I know not in what trifling thoughts,
 One whom I scarcely knew by name ran up,
 Seizing my hand:

‘How are you, my dear friend?’—

‘Well as times go, and hoping all you wish.’—

5

Then to be rid of him:

‘Your servant, Sir.’—

‘You know me, sure! A man of letters, I.’—

‘The more your merit.’—

Longing to escape,
 I moved on, came to a halt, whisper'd my slave,
 In perspiration bathed from head to foot.
 ‘O, for Bolanus' ready wit!’ I sigh'd.—

10

* *Measure for Measure*, A. iv. Sc. 3.

While he went babbling on of this and that,
 Praising the streets, the city, I was mute.
 'Ha! you would shake me off, but I hold on:
 Go where you will, I follow.'—

15

'Not at all,
 Out of your way entirely: I am bound
 To visit a sick friend, who knows you not,
 Across the Tiber, close to Cæsar's grounds.'—
 'All right; I've legs and leisure, come along.'—
 I let my ears droop, like a stubborn ass
 Grievously burthen'd. He resumes:

20

25

'If well
 I know myself, Viscus nor Varius
 Is worthier of your friendship: none can write
 More verses or more quickly: I dance well:
 And when I sing Tigellius envies me.'—
 I put a question here:

'Have you no mother,
 Kinsfolk, well-wishers?'—

'None, all buried, all!'—

Thrice happy they, my turn is next, despatch.
 The hour is come by Sabine witch foretold,
 Turning her magic urn, to me a child: 30
 Thee neither drug shall kill, nor hostile sword,
 Nor pleurisy, nor cough, nor limping gout,
 Loose talk shall be thy bane, of chattering
 Beware, if wise, when grown to man's estate.

The fourth part of the day was pass'd: we came 35
 To Vesta's; he, bound over to appear
 In court hard by, or pay the penalty,
 Cried:

'If you love me, come in here awhile.'—
 'I have no skill in law, I cannot stay;
 Bound you know whither.'—

40

'I must either lose
 My cause or you.'—

'Me, pray!'—

'I will not do it'

And on he stalk'd, I following, as a slave
 Attends his master. Presently, he ask'd:
 'How fare you with Mæcenas, a shrewd man,

Exclusive too, he push'd his fortunes well;
 If you would introduce me, I could play
 Into your hands and help you to supplant
 All rivals.'—

'There, we live not as you think;
 No house so pure, so free from jealousies.
 What matters it to me if one is rich,
 Another learned, each one finds his place.'—
 'Strange, hardly credible.'—

'Yet so it is.'—
 'Your words inflame my purpose to get at him.'—
 'Be firm of will, a man of your deserts
 Must conquer: force the outworks; if you can,
 The citadel must fall.'—

'I'll spare no pains;
 Corrupt his servants; if denied to-day
 Try him again to-morrow; bide my time;
 Waylay him in the streets; conduct him home;
 Make life one struggle.'—

While he talk'd and plann'd,
 My friend Aristius, who knew the fellow,
 Met us; we stood together: Whence come you,

45

50

55

60

He asks, and whither going? We respond.—
 I grasp'd his passive arm, I nodded, wink'd,
 Made signals of distress; the wicked wag
 Stared at me blankly, and my bile was stirr'd.
 'Surely you spoke of something you would say
 To me, in private?'—

'Yes, but not to-day;
 The thirtieth Sabbath: would you scandalize
 The curtail'd Jews?'—

'I have no scruples, I.'—
 'But I am less strong-minded, of the many;
 Excuse me, we will talk another time.'—
 False friend; Wo worth the day! He left me there,
 Under the harrow.

As good luck would have it,
 The plaintiff comes:
 'Vile wretch, you scape me not!
 Sir, you bear witness?'—

Quick I lend my ear;

76 When a dispute could not be settled amicably, the plaintiff summoned his adversary to go with him before the *Prætor*, by saying: I appeal to the court: let us go into court: come with me to the tribunal; or the like. If he

He hales him into court, wild shouts ensue
And tumult. Thus Apollo set me free.

refused, the prosecutor took some one present to witness, saying: May I take you to witness? If the person consented, he offered the tip of his ear, which the prosecutor touched. Then the plaintiff might drag the defendant into court by force. But worthless persons, as thieves, robbers, &c., might be dragged before a judge without this formality.

Thus in *PLAUT. Pers. IV. 9. v. 10*:

S. Come, Pander, walk into court.

D. What do you accuse me of?

S. I'll tell that to the Prætor: come on.

D. What witness have you?

S. Do you think, O flesh-monger, that I would touch any mortal citizen's ear on your account.

ADAMS' *Roman Antiquities*, p. 207.

HORACE'S SATIRES.

BOOK II.

I.

A CONSULTATION.

My satire seems unjust and harsh to some,
To others weak and pointless. These aver
That verses such as mine might run to waste
A thousand in the day. 'Trebatus,
Advise me what to do.'—

'Do nothing.'—

'What ;

5

Throw down my pen?'—

'Just that.'—

'Upon my life,

'Twere better so, if I could sleep at night.'—

'That you may soundly sleep, anoint yourself,

Swim Tiber thrice, and take a draught of wine.
But if this itch of writing plagues you, sing
Of Cæsar's great achievements : such a theme
Ensures success.'—

10

'I would, but lack the power :

Not every one can paint war's bristling ranks,
The Gaul with broken spear-head in his breast,
The wounded Parthian reeling from his horse.'—

15

'And yet you might describe him, just and brave,
As did Lucilius Scipio.'—

'I'll not fail,

In fitting season ; but no verse of mine
Shall buzz importunate in Cæsar's ear,
Who, startled rudely, kicks out right and left.'—

20

'Yet, why lampoon Pantolabus the fool,
Or spendthrift Nomentanus : every one

Dislikes and dreads you, though ungall'd as yet.'—

'What can I do? Milonius longs to dance

When double candles daze his wine-struck eyes ;

25

10 Epp. II. i. l. 250 seqq.

18 Epp. I. 13. l. 3 ; II. i. l. 221.

22 Sat. II. 3. l. 224.

Castor loves horses, Pollux boxing-gloves,
 Twins they: how many heads so many tastes.
 I, in the fashion of Lucilius,
 Our better, love to write in measured verse.
 Whether affairs went well or ill with him,
 He to his books, safe friends, entrusted all
 His secrets, thus the old man's life is shown
 As in a votive tablet to the world.
 I, Puglian or Lucanian, learn of him:—
 (Venusian settlers either frontier hold,
 Sent thither when the Samnites were expell'd,
 Lest through the gap Rome's enemies might pass,
 Both districts making common cause with them.)
 But never shall this pen without a cause
 Wound any man, guarding me like a sword
 Kept in its sheath, which I would only draw
 On thieves and rogues. O king and father, Jove,
 Would that my blade were eaten up with rust,
 And I at peace with all men. Touch me not,
 I warn you, all detractors, or your names
 Shall be the laughing-stock of half the town.
 Cervius enraged invokes the law and urn;

30

35

40

45

Canidia threatens poison; Thurius
 A crushing judgment, if he tries your cause.
 That each will use the weapons nature gives,
 As nature prompts, we surely must agree,
 The wolf his teeth, the angry bull his horns,
 Instinctively. To spendthrift Scæva trust
 His mother's life, he does no violence,
 The wolf gores not, the bull bites not, O strange!
 Yet sweeten'd hemlock makes an end of her.
 Whether, in short, old age may bring me peace,
 Or death's black wings fold round me in my prime;
 Rich, poor; in Rome, in exile if so be;
 Whatever my condition, I shall write.—
 'Rash youth! you tempt your fate, some great man's friend
 Will strike you dead.'—

50

55

60

'What! when Lucilius
 Wrote in this fashion and took off the mask
 Which many, foul within, wore outwardly,
 Was Lælius, or he whose name derived
 From vanquish'd Carthage, at his wit incensed,

65

Or cared they if Metellus was hard hit,
 Or Lupus verse-bespatter'd? He arraign'd
 The people and their leaders, tribe by tribe;
 Siding with virtue and with virtue's friends. 70
 But when brave Scipio and wise Lælius
 Withdrew themselves at home from vulgar eyes,
 With loosen'd zones they joked and play'd with him
 Till supper came. And I, inferior
 In rank and talent to Lucilius, 75
 Envy must own, have lived among the great;
 And if my fancied weakness tempts her tooth
 She'll find me tough. What says Trebatius,
 Learned in law?'—
 'Your case is plausible;
 Yet bear in mind how slight neglect of forms 80
 May get you into trouble: he who writes

73 Scipio Africanus and Lælius are said to have lived on such terms of friendship and familiarity with Lucilius, that on one occasion, whilst they were waiting till supper was ready, Lælius is represented as dodging round the couches of the triclinium with Lucilius in pursuit, trying to lash him with a twisted napkin.

74 Epp. I. 20. l. 23.

CRUQUIUS' *Old Commentator*.

Bad verses against any one incurs
 A heavy doom.'—
 'Bad—yes: but if they're good;
 Approved by Cæsar. If himself unsoil'd
 He barks at one who merits all reproof?'— 85
 'The court breaks up with laughter; you go free.'

83 The libel-law was very severe in Rome: awarding even the sentence of death in flagrant cases.

83 A. P. l. 284; Epp. II. i. l. 152.

II.

HOME-SPUN PHILOSOPHY.

How great the virtue of frugality,
 (A favourite thesis by Ofella held
 Wise without method, self-taught, rustical)
 Learn, not at tables heap'd with burnish'd plate,
 When eye and brain are dazzled, and the mind, 5
 Caught by vain show, refuses better things,
 But fasting here discuss: I'll tell you why.

A judge suborn'd plays fast and loose with truth:
 When you have hunted, or rough-rid a horse
 Unbroke; nay, if such Roman sports suit not 10
 Your Grecian taste, when you have play'd at ball,
 Or put the stone that cleaves the yielding air,
 Forgetting in your game the force you spend,
 Till thirst and hunger cure your daintiness,
 Scorn common food; without Hymettian honey 15

Touch not Falernian wine: your steward's out,
 Rough seas protect the fishes: bread and salt
 Will tame the wolf. Whence comes this miracle,
 And how? The charm lies not in costly meats,
 But in yourself. No whet to appetite 20
 Like out-door work. Scar, oyster, lagois,
 Fail to delight men bloated with excess.
 Can I persuade you when a peacock's served
 Not to prefer it to the guinea-fowl?
 No: for the rare bird bears a higher price, 25
 And shows a gaudy tail. What use in that?
 You cannot eat the feathers you admire,
 And all his splendours vanish when he's cook'd;
 Yet this flesh to the other you prefer,
 And let your fancy fool your palate thus. 30
 What faculty enables you to tell
 A jack-pike taken at the Tiber's mouth
 From one between the bridges caught? You praise
 A three-pound mullet served on many plates;
 All vanity: or why abuse the pike 35
 Grown to full size? Simply that Nature made
 The one fish long, the other light of weight;

A fasting man can relish common food.
 'Give me a mullet that will fill a dish,'
 Cries some Harpeian feeder. Hot south-winds !
 Their viands taint ! Yet why invoke your aid ?
 Fresh turbot and boar's head excite disgust
 In maws intemperate that ever crave
 New stimulants. Not yet all poor-men's food
 Is banish'd from rich tables ; eggs remain,
 And olives find their place. Not long ago
 The board of rich Gallonius was disgraced
 By sturgeon. What, was turbot then so scarce ?
 They were as safe as storks within their nest,
 Till prætor Rufus brought these into vogue.
 If he should say that spitted gulls are sweet,
 Some Roman youths would serve them as a roast.

Simple, not sordid, should your table be,
 Ofella says, or you avoid one fault
 To stumble on another. Avidienus,
 To whom his name, the dog, so aptly sticks,
 Munches dry cornels, olives five years old,
 Washing them down with wine to verjuice turn'd ;

And though with toga scour'd he celebrate
 A marriage-feast, a birth-day or the like,
 Drops with his own hand on his cabbages,
 Out of the kitchen horn, to your disgust,
 Foul smelling oil, nor spares his vinegar.
 Which style of living will the wise man choose,
 Will he be wolf or dog ? as people say.
 He must be careful not to give offence
 By sordid habits ; rule his household well,
 Without rough usage, like Albutius
 The savage ; nor, like easy Nævius,
 Let them hand greasy water to his guests.
 Think now, how great and manifold the gain
 Of moderate living. First, your health is good :
 Remember how the single dish of old
 Left your digestion easy and complete.
 Now roast and stew, shell-fish and thrush combined,
 Discord and tumult in your stomach raise,
 And vex your mucous membrane. See, how pale

68 The Scholiasts say, this savage old man used to flog his slaves before they did wrong, 'because,' said he, 'when you do wrong, I may not be at leisure to flog you.'—Maclean's *Horace*.

Men rise from heavy suppers: last night's vice
 Weighs down the body and through it the soul,
 Embruting the diviner part of man. 80
 Another, supping lightly, sleeps at once,
 And wakes refresh'd to his appointed work.
 Yet will he sometimes give himself a treat,
 When the New-Year brings round a festive day,
 Or his spare body craves a little change, 85
 Or when years and infirmity excuse
 Soft treatment: what can men fall back upon,
 In youth and health carousing to excess,
 When sickness overtakes them or old age?

* * * * *

Care you for good report, more sweet than song 95
 To human ears? Great fishes, pots and pans,
 Bring shame and loss. An angry uncle scolds,
 Your neighbours tattle, and you long to die,
 Hating yourself, yet lack the wherewithal
 To buy a halter.—'Lecture Trausius, 100
 Not me,' he says, 'with ample revenues.

And treasure to endow a leash of kings.'—
 If so, you might to more advantage put
 Your surplus. Why does any good man want?
 Why fall our ancient temples to decay? 105
 Why does your country share not in your wealth?
 For you alone all things of course go well,
 O laughing-stock to be! But which of these,
 When Fortune changes, best can trust himself:
 The man with mind and body steep'd in vice, 110
 Or he who lives content, yet looks ahead
 And wisely arms for war in time of peace?

For instance, this Ofella, as a boy
 I knew him, spent as owner of his land
 No more than now as tenant: at the farm, 115
 With sons and herds around him, hear the carle,
 Boasting: I take no food on common days
 But vegetables with a knuckle of ham.
 If, on a rainy day when work is slack,
 Some pleasant neighbour or old friend drops in, 120
 I feed him not on fishes brought from Rome
 But kid and pullet: for dessert we have

Split figs, brown filberts, and the hanging grape.
 And after this goes round the loving-cup;
 Offerings we pour to Ceres for her gifts, 125
 And smoothe the wrinkle from our brows with wine.
 Let fickle Fortune rage and do her worst,
 What can she minish hence? Am I, are you,
 My children, starved since the new landlord came?
 Nature grants land in perpetuity 130
 Neither to me, nor him, nor any one.
 He ousted us, but fraud or subtle law,
 Or his next heir will cast him out in turn.
 Umbrenus holds what once Ofella held,
 No man's for ever: given in usufruct, 135
 Now here, now there. Wherefore be stout of heart,
 And show a bold front to adversity.

134 Soldiers, when their term of service expired, were usually rewarded by treasury pensions or by grants of land. The ager Venusinus appears to have been distributed among his soldiers by Augustus, after the battle of Philippi. The name of Umbrenus would then supersede Ofella's in the land-register.

III.

DAMASIPPUS THE STOIC.

One Damasippus, having squander'd his fortune in art-collections and other costly follies, was about to drown himself in the Tiber, when he was turned from his purpose by Stertinius the Stoic, who showed him that all the world was as mad as he. He embraced the Stoic philosophy and set himself up as censor of the follies and vices of men. He is introduced reproving the idleness of Horace, who draws him out to discourse at large on madness, general and particular, winding up with the following denunciation of extravagance, profligacy and superstition.

TAKE Nomentanus now, the Sybarite,
 For wise men class the spendthrift with the mad. 225
 He, to a thousand talents falling heir,
 Bade fishermen, bird-fanciers, fruiterers,
 Perfumers, and the Tuscan-quarter scum,

224 Sat. II. i. l. 22.

Poulterers, and Velabran parasites,
Come to him early.

Well.

They came in crowds. 230

The pander speaks:

Whatever these and I

Possess at home is yours without reserve.

Now hear what this most just young man replies:

Booted, you sleep on snow, that I may sup

On boar's flesh; you net fish in wintry seas; 235

I would not be ungrateful. Here, take you

A million sesterces; take you the same;

You, for your wife's sake, must have thrice the sum.

Clodius, in haste to swallow up his wealth,

In vinegar dissolved a precious pearl 240

Drawn from Metella's ear; 'twere just as wise

To cast it down into the common sewer.

Were Quintus Arrius' sons, the noble pair,

Well match'd in love of folly and of vice,

Who often dined on costly nightingales, 245

Sane or insane, with chalk or charcoal mark'd?

If any bearded man delights to build

Sand-castles, drives a team of harness'd mice,
Plays odd and even, rides upon a cane,
He surely must be mad. When reason shows 250
The love of women still more puerile,
And that the pastimes of a little child
Are nobler than your waste of time to gain
A harlot's smiles, will you not imitate
The convert Polemon, and wear no more 255
The trappings of your servitude, as he
Furtively put his supper-wreath away,
Abashed at the ascetic master's voice?

Offer a spoilt brat fruit: He mutters:—

No.—

Press him:

I won't.—

But give him none, he pouts.— 260

Just so the lover argues with himself:

Shall I, or not?—And uninvited haunts

261 Sat. II. 7. 1. 89.

id. Horace sets forth a lover's self-questioning, borrowed, nearly word for word, from Terence's *Eunuchus*, with the slave Parmeno's reflections upon it.

The envious door.

She sends for him again:

Shall I return, or make an end of it?

Shut out—recall'd;—shall I go back? Not I.— 265

A slave says wisely:

Master, when a thing

Is formless, methodless, we cannot treat it

By form and method: such a thing is love:

Quarrelling, making up: now squalls, now calms: 270

A tempest in a duck-pond; which if man

Could but reduce to reasonable laws,

With form and method he might lose his wits.

When you rejoice, if with an apple-pip

You chance to hit the ceiling, are you sane?

Or, lisping senile nonsense to a girl, 275

Wiser than castle-builders in the sand?

Add blood to folly, fire and sword combine:

When Marius slew Hellas and destroy'd

Himself, was he insane or criminal?

Can you, by straining terms to meet the case, 280

Condone his madness and condemn his crime?

There was a freed-man, sound in ears and eyes,
Old, sober, who with wash'd hands ran about,
At all street corners praying thus:

Save me,

Me only, no great boon for Gods to grant, 285
From death!

His mind, unless litigious

No man could warrant sound: Chrysippus counts

Him and his like of the Menenian clan.

O Jove, who bringest down and takest up,—

A mother cries, beside her sick child's bed,— 290

Let but this quartan fever leave my boy,

And he, on thy appointed fast, shall stand

Naked in Tiber.

If rare skill or chance

Save him from death, his mother's frantic zeal

And the cold stream will bring his fever back, 295

Poor victim of her superstitious vow.—

These arms Stertinius, the eighth wise man,

Gave me, his friend, gainsayers to confound.

Who calls me mad shall own himself a fool,

When I spread out the wallet at his back.— 300
 A rising market to your dear-bought wares!
 Yet show me, Stoic, my peculiar craze,
 For to myself my mind seems sound enough.—
 Just so Agave with her dead son's head
 Thought herself sober!—

Well! to own the truth, 305
 I know myself a fool and even mad.
 But tell me freely what ingrain'd defects
 You tax me with.—

Attend now; first you build;
 That is, you, two foot nothing that you are,
 Vie with the tallest. When you ridicule 310
 The swagger and the disproportion'd strut
 Of the dwarf Turbo, are you less absurd?
 Why must you do all that Mæcenas does,
 You, so unlike in fortune and in rank?
 A fry of tadpoles, by a calf's-foot crush'd, 315
 Died, all but one, who told the absent frog
 That some huge beast had squash'd the family.
 How big? drawing her breath, as big as this?—

Bigger by half.—

As this?—

While more and more

She swells herself;

You could not, if you burst, 320

Come near his size.—

Your portrait, to the life.

Add now your poems, that is, oil to fire;

If sane man ever wrote such you are sane.

Your violence.—

Enough!—

Your style of living,

Beyond your means.—

Nay, mind your own affairs.— 325

Your profligate excesses and amours.—

O fool the greater, bear with fool the less.

324 Epp. I. 8. l. 9, 10.

VI.

TOWN AND COUNTRY.

THIS was my prayer: a farm of moderate size,
 A garden-house beside a tinkling brook,
 May be a little wood. The Gods fulfill'd
 My utmost wish: 'tis well: I ask no more,
 O Mercury, but to retain them still; 5
 That neither greed may urge me to augment
 Nor vicious waste to dissipate thy gifts;
 Nor folly whisper: Ah! that corner-field,
 How nicely it would fit into my farm,
 If I upon an urn of silver chanced, 10
 Like him who finding treasure bought the land
 He plough'd for hire, by aid of Hercules.
 If I am grateful for the past, henceforth

Let my beasts fatten and all else except
 My wits, and prosper me as thou art wont. 15
 So, when from town I seek my mountain home,
 What subject most befits my pungent Muse?
 Ambition grieves me not, nor leaden skies,
 Nor feverish Autumn, harbinger of death.

O Janus, father Matutinus hight, 20
 To whom, as heaven ordains, men dedicate
 Their life and works, be thou my earliest theme.
 At Rome, thou hurriest me to bail a friend:—
 Come quickly: lest another take thy place.—
 Though North-winds blow and winter's narrowing arc 25
 Obscures the day with snow-storms, I must go.
 This business despatch'd, I push my way
 Among the crowd, and tread on some one's toes.
 The impious man with curses turns on me:
 What do you mean? Must all folks stand aside, 30
 That you may get back to Mæcenas, fool!—
 This pleases me, I own; but when I reach
 The Esquiline, a swarm of petty cares

Buzz round me:—

Roscius entreats you meet him,
At two, beside the Puteal to-morrow.— 35
The scribes remind you that they sit to-day
On matters of importance; Quintus, come.—
Take care Mæcenas seals these tablets, will you?—
I'll try.—

He growls: Nay, if you will, you can.—

Seven years ago, Mæcenas first began 40
To be on friendly terms with me; that is,
He took me in his coach and chatted thus:
What time is it?—Think you Gallina of Thrace
A match for Syrus?—Keen, this morning air.—
Trifles dropp'd kindly in receptive ears. 45
Since then, each day and hour, am I the butt
Of envy:—Always with him at the games;
Or ball-play in the circus: lucky man!—
Bad news flows from the rostra through the street:

35 The Puteal Libonis, a building in the Forum. The place or its neighbourhood was the resort of money-lenders.

42 Sat. I. 5. l. 86.

Each gossip asks me:

Flaccus, my good friend, 50
You, trusted so by men in power, must know,
What have you heard from Dacia?—

Nothing, I.—

Close as a shutter, eh?—

By all the Gods,

Not one word.—

Then: the farms that Cæsar gives
His soldiers, are they on Italian soil, 55
Or in Triquetra?—

When I vow I know not,

They say:

Was ever man so still and deep?—

Thus waste I tedious days. Venusia,
When shall I see thy blest retreats again?
And with old books, and sleep, and leisure hours, 60
Drown all my cares in sweet forgetfulness?
When shall the bean, kin to Pythagoras,
And pot-herbs, duly cook'd in lard, be served?
O nights and suppers of the Gods, which I

Eat by my own fire-side with loving friends, 65
 And feed my servants on the ample scraps!
 Each drinks just what he will, and when he will,
 Large cups or small, exempt from foolish laws.
 Then we converse:—no idle gossipry
 And tittle-tattle from a neighbour's house; 70
 Nor whether Lepos dances well or ill;
 But themes that interest the world at large;
 As, whether wealth or virtue makes the man?
 Is interest or esteem the root of love?
 What is the nature and the scope of good? 75
 Upon all this my neighbour Cervius grafts
 His senile parable. If one extols
 The treasures of Arellius, he begins:
 Once in his hole a country mouse received
 A city mouse, old host, old guest were they. 80
 Sharp, watchful of his stores; yet liberal
 In hospitalities. Enough! He grudged not
 His friend the long oat nor the treasured vetch;
 Brought raisins and half-nibbled scraps of lard,
 Hoping by such variety to tempt 85
 His palate, for he scarcely touch'd the food;

While he, the master, lying in the straw,
 Ate tares and darnel, fasting from the best.
 Then spoke the guest:
 Friend, how can you endure
 To live secluded on this woody ridge, 90
 Far from the haunts of men and city-feasts?
 Come home with me: know that terrestrial mice
 Are mortal; there is no escape from death,
 For great or little. Wherefore, my good mouse,
 Live happy while you may; enjoy yourself; 95
 Mindful how brief is life. The country mouse
 Fired by his words leaps lightly from his hole.
 They journey on together, purposing
 To creep by night under the city walls.
 Great darkness reigns in heaven as both the friends 100
 Enter a wealthy house, where coverlets
 Of richest dye on ivory couches glow,
 And much remains of yesterday's repast
 Preserved in well-fill'd baskets stand around.
 The city-mouse then lays his country friend 105
 In purple, girds himself, runs to and fro,
 Prolongs the feast, with assiduity

Eat by my own fire-side with loving friends, 65
 And feed my servants on the ample scraps!
 Each drinks just what he will, and when he will,
 Large cups or small, exempt from foolish laws.
 Then we converse:—no idle gossipry
 And tittle-tattle from a neighbour's house; 70
 Nor whether Lepos dances well or ill;
 But themes that interest the world at large;
 As, whether wealth or virtue makes the man?
 Is interest or esteem the root of love?
 What is the nature and the scope of good? 75
 Upon all this my neighbour Cervius grafts
 His senile parable. If one extols
 The treasures of Arellius, he begins:
 Once in his hole a country mouse received
 A city mouse, old host, old guest were they. 80
 Sharp, watchful of his stores; yet liberal
 In hospitalities. Enough! He grudged not
 His friend the long oat nor the treasured vetch;
 Brought raisins and half-nibbled scraps of lard,
 Hoping by such variety to tempt 85
 His palate, for he scarcely touch'd the food;

While he, the master, lying in the straw,
 Ate tares and darnel, fasting from the best.
 Then spoke the guest:

Friend, how can you endure
 To live secluded on this woody ridge, 90
 Far from the haunts of men and city-feasts?
 Come home with me: know that terrestrial mice
 Are mortal; there is no escape from death,
 For great or little. Wherefore, my good mouse,
 Live happy while you may; enjoy yourself; 95
 Mindful how brief is life. The country mouse
 Fired by his words leaps lightly from his hole.
 They journey on together, purposing
 To creep by night under the city walls.
 Great darkness reigns in heaven as both the friends 100
 Enter a wealthy house, where coverlets
 Of richest dye on ivory couches glow,
 And much remains of yesterday's repast
 Preserved in well-fill'd baskets stand around.
 The city-mouse then lays his country friend 105
 In purple, girds himself, runs to and fro,
 Prolongs the feast, with assiduity

Of service, tasting every dish he brings.
 The other, soft-reclining, much enjoys
 His lot, his food, his host: when suddenly 110
 A clash of doors scares either from his couch;
 This way and that they run, in deadly fear
 When fierce Molossian dogs begin to bark.
 Then says the guest:
 A country life for me.
 Thanks, fare you well! I'm for my hole again, 115
 To feed securely on my frugal pulse.

VII.

PLAYING WITH EDGE TOOLS.

LONG have I listen'd and would fain reply,
 But dare not.—

Is it Davus?—

Davus, yes:

A slave whose faithful service might have earn'd
 True life, free speech.—

Come, for old use and wont,
 Take your December privilege, have your say.— 5

⁴ Cruquius, differing from Turnebus and Lambinus, thus interprets the words 'ut vitale putes'. Horace's answer puts aside the real meaning of Davus, who was pleading, not for the momentary license of the Saturnalia, but for perpetual freedom. The condition of the slave is such that he has no share in man's natural life, which consists in free speech and free action. Cruquius' entire argument is too long for insertion in this place.

Part of mankind, on self-indulgence bent,
 Sin of set purpose; others fluctuate,
 To evil now inclining, now to good.
 Priscus, one day three-ring'd, bare-handed goes
 The next, and shifts his badge from hour to hour; 10
 Now grandly housed, now in some foul abode,
 Of which a decent freed-man were ashamed.
 A libertine in Rome, in Greece a sage,
 Doom'd by Vertumnus to inconstancy.
 Lewd Volanerius, after well-earn'd gout 15
 Crippled his joints, hired one at daily wage,
 With bed and board, to gather up the dice
 And put them in his box. Consistent sin
 Weighs not upon the conscience like the faults
 Of those who play at fast and loose with vice.— 20
 At whom point you these stale moralities?—
 At you, I say.—

How so, you gallows-bird?—
 You laud the simple habits of the past,
 Yet, if the Gods restored them, would recant;
 Either because your mind belies your tongue, 25
 Or wanting firmness to defend the right;

With one foot free, the other in the mire.
 At Rome you praise the country; being there,
 Extol Rome to the skies. If nowhere bid
 To supper, praise your vegetarian fare, 30
 Hate social slavery, are exceeding glad
 To spend a sober night. But if at dusk
 Mæcenus sends for you to fill a gap:
 Quick—where's my lantern, look alive—you bawl
 And bluster, till you're off: while Mulvius 35
 And others, who had thought to sup with you,
 Go growling home. He thinks, perhaps, like me:
 I own I love my belly, savoury smells
 Delight me, foolish, lazy and a glutton.
 Should you, who are no better, maybe worse, 40
 Be hard upon me, tricking out your vice
 In specious phrase? A greater fool than I,
 Your poor five-hundred drachmas-worth. Hands off!
 I care not for your choler or your frowns;
 And only tell what Crispin's porter says. 45
 You haunt your neighbour's wife, a slave-girl I,

Which most deserves the cross?

A peccant wife

Is at her husband's mercy, you as well,

Nay, with more justice; for she sought you not,

Went not disguised, espying time and place.

Although she dreads you and distrusts your love,

You hug the yoke, and, for a mad caprice,

Imperil reputation, body and soul.

You 'scape! has past experience made you wise?

Not so, you long to risk your all again,

Slave to the end. A beast, who snaps his chain,

Learns once for all to prize his liberty.

I'm no adulterer, say you?—No; nor I

In act a thief when coveting your plate:

But make it safe, and nature shows herself.

My master, you! In bondage to the world

In matters great and small, whom Prætor's wand

Touches in vain, it cannot set you free.

Now to conclude: Is he who serves a slave

A substitute, as custom phrases it,

Or fellow-slave? And such am I to you.

You, who rule me, are ruled by other men,

65

70

75

80

A puppet play'd upon by alien strings.—

Who, then, is free?—

The sage who rules himself:

Whom neither want nor chains nor death affright,

Who curbs his lusts, nor hankers after place,

Polish'd and round and in himself complete;

Whom things external soil not; Fortune's frowns

Appal not. Do you recognize yourself?

A woman asks five talents of you, rails

And drives you, drench'd with water, from her door.

She calls you back:—throw off the shameful yoke;

Say, once for all, I'm free. You cannot do it.

A hard task-master goads your weary mind,

And turns you round to work against your will.

And when you gaze, infatuate, on a work

Of Pausias, are you less to blame than I,

On tiptoe, where a poster represents,

In red and black, sword-players at their work,

Who thrust and parry to the very life?

Davus is naught; a loiterer: but you,

85

90

95

100

A subtle connoisseur and judge of art.
 I love a smoking cake: that's bad. Do you
 Of your great virtue sumptuous feasts avoid?
 Devotion to my belly harms me, why?
 My shoulders suffer; shall you go scot-free, 105
 Whose stomach craves for high-priced delicacies?
 Good things repeated sting you in the end,
 When gouty feet from bloated body flinch.
 Base is the slave who for a bunch of grapes
 Empawns a scraper: how much nobler he, 110
 Who sells a farm to furnish forth a feast?
 You cannot spend a leisure hour at home,
 Sick of yourself, a restless vagabond,
 With wine and sleep by turns beguiling care,
 In vain: she ever follows at your heels.— 115
 Oh! for a stone!—

What's up now?—

For a spear!—

He's mad, or ranting verses!—

Get you gone,

Or work, a ninth hand, on my Sabine farm!

HORACE'S EPISTLES.

BOOK I.

I.

TO MÆCENAS.

FIRST theme and last, Mæcenas, of my song,
Why should I mix in the old game again,
So often shown that now I wear the foil?
My age, my mind are changed. Veianius,
Lest he should beg for quarter at the last,
Offering his arms to Hercules, retired.
A warning voice has whisper'd in my ear:
Turn the old horse in season out to grass,
He'll prove a roarer else, a butt for fools.
So, putting verse and sportive themes aside,
To truth and wisdom I devote my thoughts,
And store them in my mind for future use.

5

10

But,—if you ask me of my sect or school,—
 Not caring to endorse a master's words,
 I thread the maze of independent thought; 15
 Now boldly swimming on the civic wave
 A satellite of virtue and of law;
 Now falling back on Aristippus' rules,
 Constraining, not constrain'd by circumstance.
 As night seems long when lovers are untrue, 20
 And day to men who toil; as lags the year
 That brings release from hated pupillage;
 So, sluggish and distasteful are the times
 Wasting my hope and purpose to achieve
 That which may profit rich and poor alike, 25
 Or, if neglected, wrong both young and old.
 Be this the rule and solace of my life:
 You cannot see as far as Lynceus sees,
 But skilful treatment may improve your eyes:
 You cannot rival Glycon's strength of limb, 30
 But temperance may hold your gout in check:
 So far right means avail if not beyond.

For hearts inflamed by lust or avarice,

The charms and precepts of philosophy
 Soothe pain and mitigate disease in part. 35
 Ambition stirs you?—remedies abound
 In books thrice read with pure and docile mind.
 Wrath, envy, sloth, intemperance or love?—
 None are so wild but that they may be tamed
 If we to culture lend a patient ear. 40
 First step in virtue is recoil from vice,
 In sense from folly. See, with what a strain
 On mind and body men contend against
 Those which they deem the worst of human ills,
 A poor estate or failure at the hustings. 45
 In dread of poverty the merchant flies
 Through seas and rocks and fire to utmost Ind,
 And scorns the teachings of experience
 That show the hollowness of all he seeks.

What village boxer, flush'd with trivial praise, 50
 But would aspire to the Olympian prize,
 If he might have the palm without the dust?
 Silver to gold, to virtue gold is dross.
 With Romans money is the first and last,

And virtue nowhere: all the forum rings 55
 With this vile doctrine, tainting men and boys
 With bag and tablet hanging on their arms:—
 If of four hundred thousand sesterces
 Some six or seven lack, it matters not
 That you be wise, true, moral, eloquent, 60
 You are plebeian. Boys at pastime say:
 'He who does best is king.'—A conscience pure,
 Void of offence, let this my stronghold be.
 Now tell me, which is better, Otho's law,
 Or the boys' song that gives the highest place 65
 To men of Curius' or Camillus' mould?
 He who bids you make money, if you can
 Honestly, but make money, that's the point,
 To have a stall at Pupius' doleful plays;
 Or he whose doctrine and example teach: 70

57 Sat. I. 6. l. 75.

58 Otho Roscius, tribune of the people, settled a Knight's fee at this amount. No one whose income fell short of it could be advanced to the dignity of 'eques'.

66 O. I. 12. l. 42.

69 In the theatre, fourteen rows, next to the Orchestra, where the Senators sat, were reserved for the Knights.

ADAM'S *Roman Antiquities*, p. 25.

Do well, and fear not Fortune's haughty looks?
 But if the Roman people ask me, why
 I haunt their schools but hold their teaching cheap,
 Nor seek nor shun the things they love or hate,
 I answer, as the cautious fox replied 75
 To the sick lion:—All the tracks I see
 About your den point forwards, none return.—

O many-headed beast! what part to choose
 I know not. Some aspire to farm a tax;
 With dainties some for greedy widows fish, 80
 Or snare old men to fat in their preserves;
 Many grow rich on usury; and yet
 While one delights in this and one in that,
 Neither holds fast his purpose for an hour.
 Let Dives say: No spot on earth outshines 85
 Baïæ in loveliness: the lake, the sea
 Sparkle to greet him. When a new caprice
 Inspires him: Off, my masons, tools and all,
 Off to Theanum! On his marriage-bed
 He vows: Old Cœlebs is the happier man: 90

85 O. II. 18. l. 20. III. I. l. 33—6.

If single: Marriage is a blessed state :
 No cords this ever-changing Proteus bind.
 The poor man—have your laugh!—he shifts his bed,
 His garret, bath and barber; hires a boat,
 And sea-sick apes his betters in their yacht. 95
 You laugh to meet me with my hair ill-dress'd;
 If with a tunic fresh, and thread-bare vest,
 Or cloak put on awry, you laugh again.
 But when my judgment falsifies itself;
 Scorns what it sought; asks back what it misprised; 100
 Confuses all the order of my life;
 Pulls down, builds up, and alters square to round;
 I'm mad in the world's fashion, you laugh not,
 Nor think I need physician, or trustee
 Named by the Prætor. You, my patron, you, 105
 Whom I revere as monitor and friend,
 Take umbrage at me for an ill-cut nail.
 In fine: the man of sense is next to Jove;
 Rich, handsome, free, respected, King of Kings,—
 Specially sound, when phlegm annoys him not. 110

96 Sat. 1. 3. l. 31.

109 Sat. 1. 3. l. 125.

II.

TO LOLLIUS.

WHILST you, great Lollius, declaim in Rome,
 I, at Præneste, study Homer's works,
 Who Crantor and Chrysippus far excels
 In painting things base, noble, true and false;
 Why I think thus, if you have leisure, hear. 5
 He tells how Paris and his guilty love,
 The heats of foolish kings and those they ruled,
 Entail'd ten years of war on Greece and Troy.
 Antenor would remove the cause of strife,
 But Paris scorns to live and reign in peace, 10
 Upon compulsion. Nestor would appease
 The feud of Agamemnon and Achilles,

One fired by love and both by jealousy,
 But kings go mad and Greeks must pay the cost :
 Sedition, fraud, lust, violence abound 15
 Within the walls of Ilium as without.
 Again, in his Ulysses he presents
 A type of manhood with true wisdom join'd,
 Who, when Troy fell, his settled purpose held
 To visit many cities, many men, 20
 And battling stoutly with the adverse waves
 Bore grievous hardships on his voyage home.
 You know the Siren's song, and Circe's cup,
 Whereof had he partaken with the rest,
 Slave to a harlot mistress he had lived 25
 The life of dogs unclean and wallowing swine.
 We are the herd, born to consume earth's fruits,
 Penelopean suitors, epicures ;
 Pamper our bodies, like Alcinous,
 Sleeping till noon, and driving care away 30
 With the inglorious tinkling of a harp.
 Thieves rise by night that they may take men's lives,

To save your own you will not move a step
 Till dropsy quickens you. Unless you call
 For lamp and books before the morning breaks 35
 And give your mind to study better things,
 Envy and lust will rack you on your bed.
 Sore eyes you treat at once, a mind diseased
 May wait for treatment till another year.
 Begun—half-done : dare to be wise—begin. 40
 He, who puts off the season of reform,
 Waits like the rustic till the stream goes by,
 Which still runs on and will for evermore.

Money you seek, a wife to bear you sons,
 And lands with wood o'ergrown to plough reclaim ; 45
 Let him who has enough desire no more ;
 Nor home nor land nor store of bronze and gold
 Can keep their owner's mind and body free
 From care or fever : what he needs is health,
 First requisite for using all things well. 50
 Who fears or covets, house and home enjoys
 As blind men pictures, gouty men their wraps,
 Ears stuff'd with wax the music of a lute :

Keep the vase clean or its contents will spoil.
 Scorn pleasure, seldom worth the price it costs; 55
 Greed always wants; set bounds to your desires;
 Envy grows lean when others fatten near;
 Sicilian tyrants found no sharper rack
 Than envy. He who lets his passions loose
 Does many things that he will wish undone, 60
 Hastening revenge of wrongs with violence.
 Rage, while it lasts, is madness. Rule your mind
 With curb and bridle lest it master you.
 The breaker trains a colt while tender-mouth'd
 To feel the bit: the hound, while yet a pup, 65
 Learns from the skin it worries in the hall.
 To draw the woods: so you, pure-hearted youth,
 Instruction from your elders should receive;
 The cask keeps long the flavour it imbibed
 When new. Choose your own pace, I neither lag 70
 With those behind, nor press on those before.

III.

TO JULIUS FLORUS.

In A.U.C. 734 an embassy came from Armenia to Rome, praying that Augustus would place upon the throne Tigranes, who was then living in exile at Rome. Augustus assented and sent Tiberius with Tigranes to dethrone Artaxias. About his person Tiberius appears to have had a number of young men, such as Titius, Celsus, and Munatius, mentioned in this epistle, and Julius Florus, to whom it is addressed. Celsus was secretary to Tiberius. Whether the others had any definite occupation, or were merely travelling to enlarge their experience and see the world, is not stated.

MACLEANE'S *Horace*.

FLORUS, I long for news of Claudius,
 Our Cæsar's step-son; where his camp is pitch'd,
 Whether in Thrace, by Hebrus' icy chain,
 Or where twin towers guard the Hellespont,
 Or in the Asian hills or fertile plains.
 What of the studious cohort? Let me know

5

Who undertakes to write Augustus' life,
 His wars and treaties. What of Titius,
 Whose works ere long should be the talk of Rome?
 He dared to drink of the Pindaric spring, 10
 Disdaining placid lakes and common streams.
 How is he? Not forgetting me, I hope,
 While setting Roman themes to Theban strings,
 Or rising to the heights of tragic art.
 How fares my Celsus? Much and often warn'd 15
 To work his proper vein, and let alone
 Books which the Palatine Apollo guards:
 Lest every bird, one day, reclaim his own,
 And the poor jay, stripp'd of his borrow'd plumes,
 Go bare and point a moral. For yourself, 20
 From what thyme suck you honey? Genius
 Like yours repays fine culture. Is your bent
 In oratory, poetry or law
 To make the most of all your natural gifts,
 And win the ivy-crown? Relinquish, then, 25

17 Augustus attached a library to the temple he built for Apollo, on the Palatine hill, to commemorate his victory at Actium.

21 O. IV. 2, l. 27—32.

The petty cares and triumphs of the world,
 And make divine philosophy your own.
 This work, this study we should all advance
 In justice to our country and ourselves.

And, when you write, say if Munatius 30
 And you are friends; or does the ill-patch'd rent
 Break out again? But whether heat of blood,
 Or inexperience stiffens both your necks,
 In whatsoever regions you abide,
 Who should be yoke-fellows in mutual love, 35
 I keep a fatted calf for your return.

IV.

TO ALBIUS TIBULLUS.

ALBIUS, kind critic of my homilies,
 What keeps you still at Pedum? Do you write
 What shall eclipse the gems of Cassius?
 Or silent stroll among the healthy woods,
 Musing on what befits the wise and good?
 A soul informs your body: therewithal
 Beauty, and wealth, with art to use it well;
 What more can mother for her nursling wish

5

8 Persius, in his 2nd Satire makes mention of these nursery-prayers. After a not very complimentary description of an aged and doting grandam, he concludes with the following rather pretty lines:

Dandling her puny hope she claims for him
 The wealth of Crassus and Licinius;
 Salutes him husband of a royal bride,
 Prays that sweet girls may for his love contend,
 And roses grow where'er he sets his foot. l. 33—7.

Than to be wise, with skill to speak his thoughts;
 That he may grow in favour, fame and health,
 With purse well-furnish'd and a decent cook?
 'Mid hopes and fears, and troubles more or less,
 Think that each day which dawns may be your last,
 And joys unlook'd for will be doubly sweet.
 So, when you visit me, you'll laugh to find
 A sleek, well-fed Epicurean pig.

10

15

V.

TO MANLIUS TORQUATUS.

IF you can rough it on my Archian couch,
 And sup content with vegetarian fare,
 At sun-down I shall look for you, Torquatus;
 Your wine will date from Taurus' second term,
 Between Minturnæ grown and Sinuessa;
 Send better if you will, or bear with mine.
 For you my hearth is swept, my board is deck'd.
 Leave rival claimants, paltry litigants,

5

¹ Archias is said to have been a cabinet-maker and upholsterer, whose style and workmanship were old-fashion'd.

⁴ T. Statilius Taurus was chosen Consul, for the second time, B.C. 26.

And the great Moschus trial. Cæsar's feast
 Will give you ample time for sleep to-morrow, 10
 So we may have a night of pleasant chat.
 What profits fortune if I use it not?
 He who denies himself to serve his heir
 Is company for fools. I will begin
 To drink, throw flowers and be accounted mad. 15
 Wine does strange things: discloses hidden thoughts,
 Ratifies hopes, and makes the coward brave;
 Sharpens the wits, unloads the anxious mind.
 Whom have not quickening cups made eloquent?
 Whom not enlarged from narrowing poverty? 20
 I fitly take upon myself the care
 That neither coverlet nor table-cloth
 Offend your taste; that dish and drinking-cup
 Mirror you to yourself; that trusted friends
 Blab not abroad; that like be join'd to like 25
 In just accord. To meet you I expect
 Septicius and Butra, with Sabinus
 If pre-engagement or some pretty face

⁹ Moschus, a celebrated rhetorician of Pergamum, accused of poisoning, whose defence Torquatus had undertaken.

Detains him not: four places are unfill'd,
 But elbow-room is pleasant in this weather; 30
 Write me word back what shadows you will bring.
 Elude the clients watching at your gate,
 And slip away from business by the rear.

31 Umbræ, shadows, were persons not specially invited, who often accompanied the principal guests.

VII.

TO MÆCENAS.

I PROMISED to be back within five days,
 Yet linger on through August in the hills.
 Mæcenas, if you care for me, extend
 The kind indulgence in my sickness shown,
 To dread of sickness, when the figs and heats 5
 Trick out the undertaker and his men,
 And parents tremble for their children's sake;
 While office-work and tendance at the courts
 Breed fever, and unseal men's testaments.
 Dear friend, when snows o'erspread the Alban fields 10
 Your poet to the sea-side will repair
 For study, hoping to revisit you
 When spring's first Zephyr tempts the swallow back.
 You treat me not like the Calabrian host

Plying his guest with pears:—

I pray you, eat.— 15

I have enough.—

Just one more.—

Thank you, no.—

Take some away to please your little ones.—

As much obliged as if I took them all.—

Just as you will, my pigs will eat the rest.—

The wasteful boor gives what he cares not for, 20

And of the seed sown reaps no gratitude.

The great use courtesy to worthy men,

Distinguishing true coin from counterfeit;

I would be worthy, for my patron's credit.

If you can never spare me from your side, 25

Give back my strength, my locks of ebon hue,

My mirth and ready wit, and my despair

When wanton Cinara fail'd to grace the feast.

A half-starved mouse crept through a narrow chink

Into a corn-bin, where he took his fill, 30

And thought with rounded paunch to slip away;

28 O. IV. 1. l. 4.

A weasel, looking on, said: Wait, my friend,

You went in starved, and starved you must come out.

If such the terms my tenure suits me not,

I care not to be cramm'd until I sleep, 35

Nor can I sell my freedom at a price.

You praise my modesty: behind your back,

As face to face, I call you father—lord;

I can restore your gifts and love you still.

Well said Telemachus, Ulysses' son:— 40

No place for horses is our Ithaca,

Wanting in plains and scant of provender,

Such gifts, Atrides, are no gifts for me.—

Small birds affect small nests: I give up Rome,

In Tibur or Tarentum more at ease. 45

Philip, the shrewd, successful advocate,

As he return'd from court, towards eight o'clock,

Vowing the Forum and Carinæ road

44 Parvum parva decent:—cleyne vogelkens maken cleyne nestkens.
CRUQUIUS.

48 More literally: complaining that, at his advanced age, the Carinæ-quarter, where he lived, was at too great a distance from the Forum, where his practice lay.

Grew longer as he grew in years, espied
 A man, clean-shaved, beneath a barber's awning, 50
 Trimming his own nails with a pocket-knife.
 Demetrius, (to a confidential slave
 He spoke) go now, enquire and bring me word
 Who and what this man is, and all about him.—
 He goes, returns, reports :—Vulteius Mena, 55
 A broker of small wares, who gets and spends,
 Sluggish or active as occasion serves,
 Happy in fix'd abode and humble friends,
 And when his work is done he loves a play.—
 I would hear what you tell me from himself; 60
 Bid him to supper.—

Mena pricks his ears;
 Ponders and doubts, then answers :—
 Thank you, no.—
 Does he refuse?—

He does; shamefaced, I think.—
 Next morning Philip finds him bargaining
 With cloakless people, and salutes him first: 65
 The other pleads the calls of business,
 For not having waited on him at his house,

And with profuse apologies regrets
 He had not seen him sooner.—
 You're excused;
 But sup with me this evening.—
 As you please.— 70
 At nine, then; now, be off and fill your purse.—

From careless supper-talk of this and that,
 He sends him home to bed. This simple fish,
 A daily client now and supper-guest,
 Invited to the country, takes the bait, 75
 And spends the Latin holidays with Philip.
 He rides about, enjoys the Sabine plains
 And breezy hills: Philip looks on and laughs.
 Then, longing to make further sport of him,
 Gives fifty pounds and offers fifty more 80
 On loan, if he will buy a little farm.
 To spare you long details: the purchase made,
 Our cit was metamorphosed to a clown;
 Talk'd by the hour of furrows, vines and elms,
 And wore his life out in pursuit of gain. 85
 But when his sheep were stolen, goats diseased,

Corn blighted, oxen work'd to death at plough,
 Madden'd with loss, he took his horse by night,
 And rode at furious speed to Philip's house,
 Who, seeing him so rough, unshaven, drawls:— 90
 Vultei, it seems to me you work too hard,
 Are over anxious.—

Patron! by the Gods,
 I am the most unhappy wretch alive.
 O, by the genius of your house and name,
 Restore me to my former life again.— 95
 Let him who finds the loss involved in change,
 If he be wise, retrace his steps in time:
 Each man has scale and standard of his own.

VIII.

TO CELSUS ALBINOVANUS.

Good wishes, O my Muse, for prosperous times
 To Celsus, Nero's secretary, bear.
 Say, if he asks, that spite of wise resolves
 I'm cross and out of sorts; not that the drought
 Has spoilt my olives or the hail my vines, 5
 Nor that my herds are sick on distant fields.
 I am less ill in body than in mind,
 And will not hear a word of remedies.
 I hate the doctor, quarrel with my friends
 Who try to rouse me from this lethargy; 10

6 Sat. II. 6. l. 14.

9 Sat. II. 3. l. 324.

H.

7

I follow evil knowing what is good,
 At Rome love Tibur and at Tibur Rome.
 Next, ask about his health and his affairs,
 How he gets on with Nero and the staff.
 If he says, Well:—first tell him, I am glad;
 Then drop this word of caution in his ear:—
 Be worthy of your fortune and your friends.

15

12 Sat. II. 7. l. 28.

IX.

TO CLAUDIUS NERO.*

SEPTIMIUS only knows, O Claudius,
 How much you value me; he begg'd and pray'd
 That I would venture to commend him to you
 As a fit comrade of your chosen household.
 Thinking me nearer to you than I am
 Higher than I he rates what I can do.
 I pleaded many reasons in excuse,
 But fear'd to seem to doubt my influence,
 Reserving all your favour for myself.
 So, lest I should incur a graver charge,
 I risk the due reward of forwardness.
 But, if you laud shame doft'd in friendship's cause,
 Take this man and believe him brave and true.

5

10

* This curious epistle, in which every word is weighed, and every phrase toned down with scrupulous care, shews with how great caution Tiberius was approached, even by a private friend, from the earliest years of his manhood. Steele gives a free translation of it in his paper (*Spectator*, No. 493) on testimonials and letters of introduction.

X.

TO FUSCUS ARISTIUS.

I, lover of the country, greeting send
 To Fuscus, lover of the town; unlike
 In this alone, in all things else like twins,
 Whatever one avoids the other shuns,
 Bowing assent, as bow companion doves. 5
 You keep the nest; I haunt the pleasant brooks,
 The moss-grown rocks and groves with verdure clad.
 I, having put away the things which you
 Extol to heaven, am happy as a king;
 And, like a slave escaped from priestly cells, 10
 Prefer plain bread to honey-sweeten'd cakes.

10 He likens himself to the slave, who ran away from the priest his master, because he fed him too much on the sweet cakes offered in sacrifice. He got tired of them and wanted plainer food.

If man would lead a reasonable life,
 And ground must first be sought to build a house,
 Does not the country offer pleasant sites?
 Are narrow streets in winter gay and warm? 15
 Do breezy hours allay their stagnant heat
 When the sun maddens Leo or the Dog?
 Do rural cares and pleasures hinder sleep?
 Is turf less bright and sweet than Libyan stone?
 Or is the water drawn from leaden pipes 20
 Purer than runnels from a virgin spring?
 Look at the trees you plant in pillar'd courts,
 The house you value for its distant view;
 You pitch-fork nature out, but she returns
 And through your jaded fancies shews herself. 25
 One, who buys fleeces at Aquinum dyed
 For real Sidonian purple, suffers loss,
 But not so great as he whose moral sense
 Lacks skill to sift the falsehood from the truth.
 Him whom prosperity elates too much 30
 Reverses crush: reluctantly we yield
 The things we love; be moderate; humble roofs
 Are often blest above kings' palaces.

A fierce stag from their common pasture drove
 A horse, who pray'd at last to man for aid. 35
 Saddled and bridled forth he went again,
 But when the fight was won, the rider sat
 Firm on his back and slacken'd not the rein.
 So he, who, dreading want, his freedom sells
 For lucre, is a servant all his life, 40
 Because he fails to make the two ends meet.
 Means that fit not our place are like a shoe;
 Too short it galls, too long it trips us up.
 Wisely you live contented with your lot;
 Nor will you hide your scorn, Aristius, 45
 If with enough I labour still for more.
 Money is slave or master everywhere,
 More fit to follow than to hold the cord.
 These from behind Vacuna's ancient fane,
 But that you are not with me, leave me well. 50

48 The metaphor is taken from a prisoner led with a rope round his neck by his captor.

XI.

TO BULLATIUS.

WERE you much pleased, Bullatius, with the isles;
 With Chios, Samos, Lesbos, and the rest?
 Did royal Sardes, Smyrna, Colophon,
 Come up to, or fall short of all you hoped?
 Are they not poor and mean compared with Rome? 5
 Were you bewitch'd by any Lydian town,
 Or did fatigue of travel prompt your pen
 When thus you wrote in praise of Lebedos?—
 You know what Lebedos is: Fidenæ, Gabii,
 Less desolate:—yet there I'd spend my life, 10
 Forgetting and forgotten by the world,
 To gaze for ever on the stormy sea.—
 No traveller from Capua to Rome,
 Though wet and splash'd, would make an inn his home;

11 These two towns were proverbially joined together, as examples of former importance and present ruin.

Nor one, who gets a chill, praise baths and stoves 15
 As if they made the sum of human joys ;
 Nor should you sell your ship in foreign lands
 Because the outward voyage had been rough.
 Rhodes, Mytilene, suit a healthy man
 Like fire and cloak in summer-solstice days, 20
 Or drawers to swim the Tiber in a frost.
 While Fortune favours you return to Rome,
 And praise Rhodes, Chios, Samos from afar.
 Be grateful for the goods the Gods provide,
 And look not to next year for happiness ; 25
 So shall you find contentment everywhere.
 Reason and prudence, not the lofty cliffs
 Commanding boundless sea-views, banish care ;
 We change our skies abroad but not ourselves,
 Make much ado for very poor results, 30
 Run to and fro in quest of fuller life ;
 Here, nay at Ulubræ, is what we seek,
 If we possess our minds in soberness.

29 O. II. 16. l. 19.

32 Ulubræ, a deserted town in Campania, as impoverished as Lebedos in Asia.—CRUQUIUS.

XIII.

TO VINIUS ASELLA.

VINIUS, I warn'd you much at setting out
 My packet for Augustus to present,
 Only if, well and gay, he asks for it ;
 Lest in your over-zeal on my behalf
 You bring discredit on my little books. 5
 If you dislike the office, send them back
 Rather than fling your panniers rudely down
 Before the Emperor's feet, and justify
 Your ancient patronymic, Asina.
 March stoutly on by rivers, hills, and swamps, 10
 And when victoriously you reach the goal,

3 Sat. II. 1. l. 19; Epp. II. 1. l. 221.

Go not about with my seal'd volumes thrust
 Beneath your arm, as shepherds carry lambs,
 Or tipsy Pyrrhia hanks of stolen wool,
 Or awkward tribal guests their caps and shoes.
 Boast not that you have poems in your charge
 Destin'd to catch Imperial eyes and ears;
 Though gossips pray you tarry, yet press on:
 Farewell, trip not; but do as you are bid.

15

19 otherwise:

'nor break my precious wares.'

XIV.

TO HIS FARM-BAILIFF.

BAILIFF of woods and fields where I regain
 My own free self, while you despise the hearths
 That send to Varia five good house-holders,
 See which can sooner root the brambles out,
 You from the soil or I from heart and mind,
 And which is better, Horace or his land?
 Though Lamia's sorrow for his brother's death
 Delays me here, my wishes urge me thither,
 Fretting against the line that bars my course.

5

3 To market or on municipal business.

9 The metaphor is taken from the cord, behind which the chariots, at races, were made to stand in a straight row, until the signal for them to start was given.

I hold the country, you the city blest; 10
 Thus ever he who loves another's lot
 Detests his own, accusing time and place:
 The mind's in fault, which cannot flee from self.
 You, who in town yearn'd for a country life,
 Now crave the baths and theatres of Rome: 15
 I am consistent, grieving as you know
 When hated business drags me to the city.
 Unlike in tastes we stand so far apart,
 That where you see inhospitable wilds
 I find delight; those who agree with me 20
 Hate what you love: cook-shops and viler haunts
 Draw you to Rome.

You grumble that yon spot

No more bears grapes than frankincense and pepper;
 There is no tavern near where you can drink; 25
 No flute-girl pipes a tune that you may pound
 The earth with heavy foot: then, you must plough
 Fields long untouch'd by mattock; tend the ox
 Unyoked, and fill his belly with stripp'd leaves;
 And when the rains set in there's double work, 30
 To dam the river from the open meads.

Now, hear the points on which we disagree:
 I, whom fine cloaks and glossy hair became,
 Who, short of cash, pleased greedy Cinara,
 Who, ev'n from midday, drank Falernian wine, 35
 Sup lightly, sleep on grassy river-banks.
 Nor blush I for past frolics, yet should blush
 Not to forego them now: in that retreat
 My calm contentment fears no evil eye,
 Hatred and envy poison not my life, 40
 Though neighbours smile when I move clods and stones.
 You long to munch a town-slave's modicum
 Among the chattering rout who envy you
 The use of fire-wood, milk and garden-stuff.
 Ox wants horse-trappings, horse would draw the plough: 45
 Learn each, say I, to like the art he knows.

XVI.

TO QUINCTIUS.

IN case you ask, O Quinctius, if my lands
With orchard, meadow, and the vine-clad elm,
With oil and corn enrich their occupant,
I send you all details of form and site.

Our shady valley intersects a range
Of heights; the right slope greets the morning sun,
The left is open to his evening rays.
The climate perfect: every hedge is bright
With plum and cornel: oak and ilex yield
Shade for the master, acorns for his hogs:

² O. II 15. l. 4.

³ III. 16. l. 29.

5

10

You'd say a new Tarentum blooms near Rome.
Our spring that feeds the river down below,
Cool, pure as Hebrus where it borders Thrace,
Is good for addled brain and stomach weak.
In this wild, but, believe me, dear retreat
I trust you'll find me well in autumn days.

15

You live well, if you live as men report,
All Rome points to you as a happy man.
Heed not their words, but question with yourself,
Who can be happy save the wise and good?
So, if the world accounts you well and strong,
Dissemble not until your trembling hands
Betray the inward fever. Foolish shame
From the physician hides the secret sore.
If one should laud your deeds by sea and land,
And soothe your ears with these too flattering words:—
Jove only knows, who cares for both, if most
You love the people or the people you:—
Would you accept the praise to Cæsar due?
If they extol your wisdom, would you think
The compliment sincere?—

20

25

30

Well, most men like
 To be reputed wise; you do, yourself.—
 The idol of to-day is thrust aside
 To-morrow, like an officer dismissed.
 Resign, the people say, and I retire. 35
 But if the mob arraign me as a thief,
 Attack my honour, call me parricide,
 Am I abash'd, or stung by their reproach?
 False praise elates and calumny affrights
 None but the base and foolish. Who is good? 40
 The man who lives by law and equity,
 Whose sponsorship and witness is allow'd,
 Who judges every cause in righteousness.
 Yet may this fair outside be foul within,
 And known as such by those who know it best. 45
 My slave says: I'm no thief, no runaway.—
 I answer: Therefore you escape the lash.—
 No murderer.—

Then, you shall not feed the crows.—
 No waster.—

Here, this Sabine shakes his head.

44 Sat. II. 1. l. 64.

You're wary, as the wolf, the hawk, the pike, 50
 That dread the trap, the snare, the baited hook.
 Good men for love of virtue keep from sin;
 You but abstain for fear of punishment.
 Could you escape detection you would rob.
 If from a thousand sheaves you steal but one, 55
 My loss is lighter, but not so your crime.
 Your good man, revered in the market-place,
 Who would appease the Gods with ox or swine,
 On Janus or Apollo loudly calls,
 Then prays in silence: O Laverna fair, 60
 Make me appear a just and holy man,
 Conceal my sin and fraud from every eye.—

The miser is no better than a slave
 Who stoops to clutch a penny from the mud.
 For he who covets much will fear the more, 65
 And he who lives in fear is never free.
 He throws away his arms, deserts his post,
 Who, ever scheming, hastens to be rich.
 When you can sell a captive, kill him not,
 He's useful: tends your swine, or ploughs your land, 70

H.

8

Or sails in merchant-ships o'er wintry seas,
 To fill your granaries with abundant corn.
 The virtuous man says: Pentheus, king of Thebes,
 What shame or loss can you inflict on me?—
 Confiscate all your goods.—

My cattle, plate, 75
 Beds, money: take them all.—

A cruel churl
 Shall watch you, bound and chain'd.—
 The God himself

Shall loose me when I will.—
 Perhaps he means:

I can but die, death is the goal of life. 79

73 Pentheus, king of Thebes, hearing that a young stranger has come to his country, giving himself out to be Dionysus, and has tempted all the women to go out and do honour to him, sends his servants to apprehend him. The god allows himself to be apprehended, and, when brought before the king, describes himself as the servant of Dionysus. Then follows a dialogue, of which the above forms part.

MACLEANE'S *Horace*.

79 In this passage Horace again alludes to the cord (see foot-note on p. 107) which appears to have served both for starting-point and goal in chariot-races.

XVII.

TO SCÆVA.

SCÆVA, although you know the world too well
 To fail in tact or deference to the great,
 Hear what a little friend, still learning, thinks.
 Blind leader of the blind, you'll say: and yet,
 My long experience may assist your own. 5
 If quiet morning sleep preserves your health,
 Or dust and creaking wheels and tavern brawls
 Offend your taste, to Ferentinum go.
 Enjoyment comes not to the great alone,
 Nor fares he ill who lives and dies unknown. 10

Yet in the commerce of the wise and great
 You may both please yourself and serve your friends.

'If you could sup on roots you need not live
With kings.'—

'If you knew how to live with kings
You need not sup on roots.'—

But tell me now, 15
Which has the best of it in word and deed,
Or learn of me how Aristippus wins,
Who parried thus the snarling Cynic's blow :—
'Serving the king, who mounts and feeds me well,
I live in comfort : you, who want for nothing, 20
Are to the mob beholden for their scraps.
We look on life from different points of view.'—
No state to Aristippus came amiss,
Contented now, but glad if wealth increased :
While he, who pompously displays his rags, 25
Rolling in gold would be a lazar still.
The one, not waiting for a purple cloak,
Dress'd modestly can walk through crowded streets,
The other, in his scorn of finery,
Rather than change his rags would die of cold : 30
Restore them and indulge his sordid whim.

To rule the state and drag her captive foes
In triumph is a glory fit for Gods,
But those deserve some praise who please the great.
Not every man at Corinth can succeed, 35
He who dreads failure stays inert at home.
But those who strive are manlier : what we seek
Is here if anywhere : one fears a load
Too heavy for his courage or his back,
One bears it through : if manliness is worth, 40
The bold man merits honour and reward.

Now to sum up : parade of poverty
Loosens no purse-strings, which discriminate
A modest client from a begging knave.
Who says :—my sister's dowerless, mother poor, 45
Land unproductive and not saleable,
Cries :—give us food. Another then chimes in :—
Quarter the loaf that I may have a share.
Could the crow eat in silence he would find
Less strife and envy, with a larger meal. 50
A client, taken on a sea-side trip,

Whose talk is of rough roads and rain and cold,
 Of broken trunks and pilfer'd travelling gear,
 Reminds his patron of a harlot's wiles,
 Who weeps so oft for gauds she never had 55
 That if she lose one you distrust her tale.
 Nor does a man once hoax'd care very much
 To take a broken-legg'd impostor up,
 Although he weeps and by Osiris swears:—
 It is no joke: assist a crippled wretch.— 60
 Tell that to strangers.—All the neighbours cry.

XIX.

TO MÆCENAS.

ON old Cratinus if you pin your faith,
 No water-drinker's poems ever throve.
 My learned friend, since Dionysus first
 Mad poets with his Fauns and Satyrs class'd,
 At noon-day all the Muses smell of wine. 5
 Homer, for praise of wine, is deem'd a sot,
 And father Ennius never sang till drunk.
 Let water-drinkers to the Forum stick
 And Libo's puteal:—they cannot sing.
 This edict issued, would-be poets now 10
 Parade their tipsiness by night and day.
 What, if a bare-foot man, of rough aspect,

9 Sat. II. 6. l. 35, note.

Whose talk is of rough roads and rain and cold,
 Of broken trunks and pilfer'd travelling gear,
 Reminds his patron of a harlot's wiles,
 Who weeps so oft for gauds she never had 55
 That if she lose one you distrust her tale.
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 What, if a bare-foot man, of rough aspect,

9 Sat. II. 6. l. 35, note.

With scanty cloak apes Cato's style of dress,
 Can he come up to Cato's mode of life?
 Cordus, of envy dying, fail'd to reach 15
 The grace and polish of Timagenes.
 A model's faults are copied: were I pale,
 A draught of cummin would become the mode.
 O imitators, slavish herd! How oft
 Your follies stir my bile, how oft my mirth. 20

I, first, have ventured on untrodden ground,
 A true discoverer: the boldest bee
 Leads out the swarm. I, first, to Latium show'd
 The force and method of Archilochus,
 Without the gall that drove Lycambes mad. 25
 You would not surely clip my ivy-crown
 Because so great a model form'd my style.
 The virile Sappho follows in his wake;
 Alcæus, too, with other aims and ends.
 He twines no halter for his promised bride,' 30
 Nor kills her father with indecent verse.
 To him my Roman lyrics I ascribe,

21 O. III. 30. l. 13; IV. 2. l. 28 seqq.; IV. 9. l. 3.

Rejoiced if such revivals, when unroll'd
 By hands ingenuous, please ingenuous eyes.
 Why do so many readers, who devour 35
 My books at home, disparage them abroad?
 Because I angle not for their applause
 With feasts, or presents of my cast-off clothes.
 I, who exchange ideas with the best,
 Hold pedants and their desks in slight esteem; 40
 Hence all this rancour. If I own:—my Muse
 Is fitter for the closet than the stage:—
 Ay, sneer, says one, you keep her for the great,
 Conceiting that your pen alone distils
 Poetic honey: make a match with me. 45
 Dreading my rival's virulence, I cry:
 Not now, not here: excuse me for the nonce.
 For such a contest breeds an angry spirit,
 An angry spirit enmity and war.

33 Epp. I. 20. l. 1, note.

42 Epp. II. 1. l. 217.

45 Sat. I. 4. l. 14.

XX.

TO HIS BOOK.

O Book, for Janus and Vertumnus bound
 To flaunt abroad in Sosian finery;
 Hating the keys and seals of modest youth
 You long to see and to be seen of all.
 False to your training. Go not forth; return
 Is none.—

5

Whom have I wrong'd in word or deed?—
 I hear you cry, when people mock at you,
 Or quondam lovers shut you up again.
 I judge, perhaps in anger at your sins,

¹ Near the temples of Janus and Vertumnus were the stalls where the brothers Sosii, Horace's booksellers, exposed their works for sale. The rollers on which they were mounted were often richly ornamented; the parchment polished with pumice-stone; and the edges anointed with cedar-oil to preserve them from insects.

² A. P. l. 346.

That, though your vogue may last in Rome a while, 10
 Yet, when bethumb'd and soil'd by vulgar hands,
 You will be eaten up by moth and worm,
 Or parcel goods for Spain and Africa.
 Your disregarded monitor will laugh,
 Like him who thrust his mule upon the rocks, 15
 And let the wilful creature have her way.
 When old and doting, it may be your fate
 To serve as primer in some village-school.
 Perhaps on some fine evening read aloud
 Hearers may learn that I, the freed-man's son, 20
 Essay'd from my poor nest a higher flight,
 And won by merit what my birth denied,
 The favour of the great, at home, abroad.
 Of stature low, soon grizzled, fond of warmth,
 Choleric, I own, but easily appeased. 25
 If any one should chance to ask my age,
 Say, I completed four and forty years,
 When Lollius had for colleague Lepidus.

¹³ In the text :— for Ilerda, now Lerida, in Spain, and Utica, in Libya.

²⁰ Sat. i. 6. l. 6; l. 45.

²³ Sat. ii. i. l. 76. Epp. i. 17. l. 34.

²⁸ O. iv. 9.

HORACE'S EPISTLES.

BOOK II.

I.

TO AUGUSTUS.

CÆSAR, while many cares upon you weigh,
New schemes of law, of national defence,
Of public morals, I should wrong the state
If I took up your time with much discourse.

Romulus, Dionysus, Leda's twins,
For their great deeds received among the Gods,
While they improved the earth and race of men,
Apportion'd lands, built towns, abolish'd war,
Had scanty guerdon of their noble work.
He, who destroy'd the Hydra and fulfill'd
The twelve great tasks imposed upon his life,
Found envy last and hardest to subdue.
But he, whose splendour blinds us while he lives,
Is worshipp'd after death by all mankind.

5

10

Rome, grateful for your living virtue, builds 15
 And kneels at altars sacred to a name
 Than which none greater has been or can be.
 Yet this your people, wise and just for once,
 Preferring you to Greek kings and their own,
 Have other weights and scales for other things, 20
 Holding them in contempt if not in hate
 Till dead and gone; so bit with what is old
 As to believe the tables of the law
 Which the Decemvirs seal'd, the equal leagues
 With Volscian and with stubborn Sabine made, 25
 The Pontiff's books and the Sibylline leaves
 Came from the Muses on the Alban Mount.

If, because Greece in early times produced
 Her greatest poets, Romans must be weigh'd
 In the same scale, there's nothing more to say: 30
 Olives are hard without and nuts within.
 We're on the top of Fortune's wheel; we paint

17 O. IV. 2. l. 37.

27 Most of these were obsolete and some absolutely unintelligible. The Carmen Saliare of Numa, for instance. See below, l. 86.

And sing and wrestle better than the Greeks.
 If poems ripen like good wine with age,
 Tell me, how many years their value stamp? 35
 Is he who died a hundred years ago
 Class'd with the old and perfect, or among
 The vile and modern? Limit the dispute.—
 A hundred years approve him old and good.—
 But he who falls short by a year or month, 40
 How class you him, among the ancient bards,
 Or those whom now and ever you abjure?—
 The man who only lacks a month or year
 May fairly hold his place among the old.—
 I take you at your word: and year by year 45
 Abstract, like him who pluck'd the horse's tail,
 Till my Sorites leaves you not a hair

34—49 Horace ironically grants that age gives value to writings; and then proceeds to ask: Do a hundred years suffice?—His catechumen answers: Yes.—But if a month is wanting, does the author cease to be worth reading?—No.—But if a year?—No.—But if two, three, four years?—No.—Then the value of a book does not depend on its age, and the most ancient works are not necessarily the best. Horace illustrates his argument by the old story about plucking the hairs from a horse's tail: if one, two, three, four years can neither add to nor diminish the authority of a book, so neither can a hundred years, and there his Sorites concludes. CRUQUUS.

To split in argument, computing thus
Man's worth by annals and records of death.

Ennius, the wise and brave, whom critics name 50
The second Homer, seems but little moved
By dreams and dogmas of Pythagoras.
Nævius, still fresh in hand and memory,
Shews how we venerate an ancient name.
Weighing their gifts, Pacuvius wins the palm 55
For learning, Accius for sublimity.
Menander's mantle draped Afranius well;
Plautus in wit ran Epicharmus hard;
Terence in art, Cæcilius in weight
Excels: these poets studious Rome admires, 60
And crowds the theatre to hear their plays,
In high esteem from Livy's day to ours.
Sometimes the crowd is right, as often wrong:

62 T. Livius Andronicus is spoken of by Quintilian, as the first Roman poet, and without much respect:—What would have been the case if those who followed him had done no better than he? We should have nothing in poetry better than Livius Andronicus, nothing in history better than the Pontifical Annals. Cicero says of his dramas, that they were not worth a second reading.

If it so lauds and venerates the old
As to admit no rivalry, it errs; 65
If it allows that they are negligent
And harsh in style, in language obsolete,
Its better judgment tallies with my own.
I go not on to say that Livy's works,
Which as a boy under Orbilius' rod 70
I learn'd, should be expunged, yet wonder much
To hear them call'd a miracle of taste;
Where, if perchance some happy phrase occurs,
Some line less harsh and awkward than the rest,
A whole string passes muster for its sake. 75
I grieve when works are slighted, not because
They're coarse and faulty, but because they're new:
The old ask not indulgence but applause.
So, when I doubt if Atta's plays adorn
The flower-strown boards, the older sort cry out 80
Against me, rash enough to criticize
Parts by grave Æsop or by Roscius play'd.
Nothing is good but what has pleased themselves,
Nor shall a pack of boys out-argue them
That what they learn'd in youth must pass from use. 85

Now, he who praises Numa's Salian hymn,
 As ignorant as I of what it means,
 Applauds not buried genius, but impugns
 Our own, and envies us and all our works.
 But had the Greeks so hated novelties, 90
 What now were old? And what should we possess
 To study and debate from mouth to mouth?

When Greece, from wars relieved, to trifles turn'd,
 Her first rage was for athletes and the turf;
 Workers in marble, bronze and ivory, 95
 And painters next absorb'd her heart and soul;
 Musicians and tragedians had their turn;
 As with babes in the nursery, a toy
 One moment sought, the next was cast aside.
 Pleasure, satiety and constant change, 100
 These were the weeds of peace and prosperous times.

It was a pleasant fashion once in Rome
 At early levée to expound the law,
 And loans discreet to worthy clients make;

86 see above, l. 27.

103 Sat. I. I. l. 10.

Learn of the old, instruct the young, how wealth 105
 May grow and ruinous desires be check'd.
 But now the people's fickle mind is turn'd
 To writing: young and old with myrtle crown
 Their heads, and dictate verses while they sup.
 I, too, professing that I never write, 110
 Lie like a Parthian and, at dawn awake,
 Ask for my reed, my paper and my desk.
 Shall landsmen steer, or shall quacks doctor us?
 Not so: when sick, we call a learned leech,
 And give the helm to who can handle it; 115
 But learned or unlearned all must write.
 And yet, this itch of scribbling has its use:
 The poet's mind is free from avarice,
 Verses he loves and cares for nothing else.
 At fires, at losses, flight of slaves he laughs; 120
 Scorns to defraud a partner or a ward;
 Lives on coarse bread and pulse; though indolent,
 Unfit for warfare, useful to the state.
 As little seeds increase and multiply
 By quiet process bearing fruit at last, 125

121 O. III. 24. l. 60.

He forms the lisping words of tender boys
 And guards their ears from profligate discourse ;
 With friendly counsel he instructs their mind,
 Rebuking envy and asperity ;
 Good deeds and bright example he extols, 130
 And cheers the troubles of the poor and sick.
 How could chaste youths and virgins learn to pray
 Unless the Muse breathed through the Poet's reed ?
 The Choir, by heavenly influence inspired,
 Call down the rains of heaven upon the land ; 135
 Danger, calamity, disease avert,
 Invoking peace on valleys thick with corn ;
 All Gods and Manes are appeased by song.)

Peasants of old, a brave contented race,
 At harvest-home regaling body and mind, 140
 After long toil to reach the promised end,
 Milk to Sylvanus, hogs to Ceres brought,
 And offer'd to their Genius flowers and wine.
 Fescennian license at the feast prevail'd
 And overflow'd in rustic raillery. 145
 Year after year, this custom held its own

With much good-humour, but the jest at last
 To earnest changing, threaten'd to invade
 The sanctities of home ; envenom'd tongues
 Stung sharply : those who were as yet unhurt 150
 Fear'd lest their turn were coming ; till a law,
 With heavy penalties on libel, pass'd.
 Dreading the stick thenceforth they changed their style
 To subjects that amuse without offence. /

Greece, though subdued, transform'd her conqueror, 155
 Planting her arts in Rome. Saturnian song
 Dwindled away and lost its virulence
 Before the new refinement ; yet we see
 Even in our day the trace of what it was.
 After the Punic Wars, but only then, 160
 The Roman on Greek models form'd his style,
 On Thespis, Æschylus and Sophocles ;
 Strove to adapt their subjects worthily ;
 A task well-suited to his natural gifts :
 He breathes the spirit of the Tragic Muse, 165

151 Sat. II. 1. l. 82. A. P. l. 284.

153 The fustuarium was a mode of putting to death by beating with sticks usually but not only, as the passage shows, inflicted on soldiers.

Yet lacks the finish of the highest art.
 The comic line seems easy, for it draws
 On common life, but common criticism
 Detects its blunders at a single glance.
 The *forte* of Plautus is a loving youth, 170
 Sage father and insidious go-between.
 Dossenus, great in hungry parasites,
 Shuffles, in slipshod fashion, on the stage,
 Intent on present profit from his plays,
 And caring little for prospective fame. 175
 Him whom vainglory to the stage attracts,
 Applause puffs up and inattention chills :
 So light a thing can tickle or can wound
 Self-love : farewell, then : I'll have none of it ;
 The mob shall neither starve nor fatten me. 180
 This too disgusts our poets with the stage :
 Unletter'd dolts will interrupt a play,
 In numbers more, less in esteem and worth,
 And threaten riot if the Knights dissent,
 When they cry out for bears or pugilists. 185

166 A. P. l. 439 seqq.
 168 id. l. 128.

Sometimes the Knight himself will starve his ears
 To feed his eyes on tinsel pageantries ;
 And drop-scenes fall for hours and hours together
 While troops of horse and foot invade the stage ;
 Then follow captive Kings in manacles, 190
 War-cars and litters, carriages and ships,
 With spoils of ivory and Corinthian bronze.
 Were he alive Democritus would laugh
 To see a giraffe or white elephant
 The cynosure of every vulgar eye ; 195
 The audience would entertain him more
 Than the best points and plot of any play.
 He'd say our writers waste their choicest gifts
 On a deaf ass : no actor's voice can rise
 Above the din that fills our theatres. 200
 'Twould seem Garganus-woods or Tuscan waves
 Were roaring in approval of the piece,
 When in barbaric trappings on the stage
 An actor steps and every hand applauds.—
 What says he ?—

Nothing.—

What then moves them so ?— 205

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A violet mantle of Tarentine dye.—
 Yet think not that I grudgingly admire
 What others do far better than myself.
 That poet, sure, could on the tight-rope dance
 Who has the magic power to grieve my heart,
 To soothe, arouse, affright me with his tale,
 And plant me now in Athens, now in Thebes.

210

And yet, if you would fill the Palatine
 With poets worthy of Apollo's fane,
 And spur them to th' ascent of Helicon,—
 Encourage those whose writings more affect
 The quiet study than the noisy stage.
 We poets do injustice to ourselves,
 Myself I spare not, when we pester you,
 Wearied or ill at ease; when we are hurt
 If friends presume to find a single fault;
 When we repeat, unask'd, our own pet lines;
 When we are grieved to waste our finest thoughts

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213 Ep. I. 3. l. 17.

217 Ep. I. 19. l. 42.

219 Sat. II. 1. l. 18.

220 Epp. I. 13. l. 3.

On vulgar, unappreciative ears;
 And hope that things will come to such a pass,
 That when you know we are at work you'll send
 And bid us want for nothing, only write.
 Meantime, Augustus, it were worth your while
 To choose, among the poets of the day,
 One worthy to record your famous deeds.
 Chærilus, a simpleton, acceptance found
 With Alexander, the great king, who paid
 His ill-turn'd verses with a royal gift.
 As awkward pens bespatter all they touch,
 So stupid eulogies foul noble deeds.
 This same great king, who bought so poor a work
 At price so rich, by ordinance forbade
 That any save Apelles should portray,
 Or other than Lysippus grave in bronze
 The form and countenance of Philip's son.
 But if that same fine judgment in the arts
 Were sought for in his literary taste,
 You'd swear he was a crass Bœotian.

225

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232 A. P. l. 358.

Virgil and Varius, poets whom you love,
 Do credit to your judgment and your gifts, 245
 Which all applaud for their sake and your own.
 Nor are the features of illustrious men
 More clear in bronze than are their minds and lives
 In poet's work. Right gladly would I quit
 My humble walk, and soar to warlike deeds 250
 And brave descriptions of your battle-fields;
 Of Alpine strongholds won and rivers bridged,
 Of foreign lands and barbarous realms subdued,
 And Parthia humbled by our Roman Prince,
 Of wars by you extinguish'd through the world, 255
 And Janus closed in universal peace,
 If will and deed were one: your majesty
 Stoops not to common praise, my modesty
 Shrinks from a theme so far above its powers.
 The wish to please oft-times defeats itself, 260
 And most of all in laudatory verse;
 Where one poor slip o' the pen will haunt the mind,
 And vitiate the merits of the whole.
 I loathe the awkward homage that degrades,

252 O. IV. 14. l. 11, seqq.

And would not be made uglier than I am 265
 In wax, nor more ridiculous in verse;
 I could but blush at such incongruous gifts,
 And with my writer in an open bier
 Be carried to the street where drugs and spice
 Wrapp'd in waste paper are exposed for sale. 270

265 Sat. I. 4. l. 21.

II.

TO JULIUS FLORUS.

FLORUS, our princely Nero's faithful friend,
 If one from Tibur or from Gabii,
 Offering a slave, should bargain with you thus :
 He's good in every point, from head to foot,
 And for eight thousand sesterces is yours ;
 Home-bred, for all house-service apt and quick,
 Has taste in art and knows a little Greek ;
 Moist clay that you can fashion as you will ;
 Moreover, sings not badly while you drink.
 Great praise begets distrust when he who brings
 His wares to market cries them up too much :
 I am not press'd for money, and can wait.
 Few dealers would so treat you, nor would I

5

10

So treat all buyers ; he play'd truant once,
 And, dreading punishment, lay hid awhile.— 15
 If you condone this escapade, and buy,
 I think you'll hardly get your money back :
 The law is clear, forewarn'd you bought a rogue,
 Judgment would go against you if you sued.

I told you, when we parted, what I am :— 20
 The worst of correspondents ; knowing well
 How you would grumble if no letters came.
 Is my precaution then of no avail,
 That you attack me wrongly, and besides
 Put in a claim for promised Lyric verse ? 25
 A soldier of Lucullus, while he slept,
 To the last farthing lost his hard-won gains :
 The next day, like an angry sharp-set wolf,
 Mad with himself no less than with the foe,
 He storm'd a royal fort, so goes the tale, 30
 Well garrison'd and full of precious spoil.
 Much honour gain'd he for this gallant deed,
 And twenty thousand pieces of reward.
 Soon afterwards, the Prætor was in straits

To take some castle, and exhorted him 35
 In words that might inflame a coward's heart :
 Good soldier! go where valour points the way,
 Glory and gold are yours! Why stand you still?—
 The crafty rustic answers:—Better choose
 Some desperado who has lost his purse. 40

I was brought up in Rome, and there I learn'd
 What mischief on the Greeks Achilles brought;
 Kind Athens added just so much of art
 That I could tell a right line from a curve,
 And seek for truth in Academus' grove. 45
 But hard times call'd me from those pleasant haunts,
 And tides of civil war forced me, unskill'd
 In arms, the great Augustus to oppose.
 After Philippi's fatal day, dismiss'd
 With feathers clipp'd, and bare of house and land, 50
 The spur of want drove me to write for gain.
 But, having now enough to live at ease,
 What hellebore could purge my madness out
 If I preferr'd not rest to authorship?
 Years, stealing on, filch from me, one by one, 55

My mirth, my love of women, wine and games,
 And now my gift of song. What can I do?
 How many men, so many are their tastes:
 You love an ode; iambics please the next;
 A third delights in Bion's coarse lampoons. 60
 You seem to me like three discordant guests,
 Each palate longing for a different dish:
 You turn away from what another likes,
 And what you crave disgusts the other two.
 Besides, how think you I can write in Rome, 65
 With care and toil beset on every side?
 I must bail one; another claims my time
 To hear and criticise his latest work;
 One friend lies sick on the Quirinal Hill,
 Another on the utmost Aventine, 70
 And I must visit both:—a tidy walk!
 But you will say: Broad streets let fancy roam.—
 Yes, with contractors and their men and mules;
 With stones and timber swaying overhead;
 With hearse and waggon struggling for the *pas*; 75

70 Sat. 1. 9. l. 18.

A mad dog here, yonder a herd of swine;—
 Go now, and make this hubbub musical.
 Poets desert the city for the grove,
 To sip their wine and slumber in the shade;
 And you expect that I shall sing like them, 80
 Distracted day and night with vulgar noise!
 A man, devoted to philosophy,
 Poring on books at Athens, seven long years,
 Mute as a statue, coming forth at last,
 Moves all the crowd to laughter: how can I 85
 Amid the strife and civic jars of Rome
 Write poems worthy of the tuneful Nine?

Two brothers, versed in law and rhetoric,
 Each in the other's eyes so perfect was,
 That Gracchus one, the other Mucius seem'd. 90
 And are our noisy poets less absurd?
 I write an ode; my friend an elegy:—

90 Q. Mucius Scaevola, the augur, son-in-law of C. Lælius, and an early instructor of Cicero (Lael. c. 1), was learned in the law; but his namesake and younger contemporary, the Pontifex Maximus (mentioned in the same treatise), was more celebrated still. This name, therefore, like that of Gracchus for oratory, stands for a consummate jurist. MACLEANE'S *Horace*.

Fine works, by all the Muses perfected!
 See, with what pomp and arrogance we strut
 Around the halls reserved for Roman bards. 95
 If you have time, go in and hear the stuff
 With which we claim our right to ivy-crowns;
 We lunge and parry, giving thrust for thrust,
 Like Samnites playing till the lights are brought.
 One votes me an Alcæus; I vote him 100
 Callimachus at least; if more he asks,
 Mimmernus he may be for aught I care.
 I bore much from the irritable race
 When once I wrote for popular applause.
 That end secured, I am myself again, 105
 And to all recitation close my ears.
 Doggrel is sure of ridicule enough,
 But doggrel-writers, if you hold your tongue,
 Are quite contented to applaud themselves.

He who would write true poems must revise 110
 His tablets with a just severity.

95 Ep. II. 1. 1. 216.

106 Epp. I. 19. 1. 39, 40.

Sternly must he reject whatever words
 Deficient seem in grace, weight, dignity,
 Although unwillingly they yield their place
 And linger still in Vesta's sanctuary. 115
 He will revive old phrases long disused,
 And set anew expressive forms of thought,
 Which Cato and Cethegus once employ'd,
 Though antiquated, out of fashion now,
 Nor yet neglect what modern use supplies. 120
 Strong, brilliant, pure, he will diffuse his wealth,
 And bless our Latium with a richer tongue;
 Will clip luxuriance, prune fruit-bearing wood,
 And give the charm of culture to the whole;
 Be light or serious as each part requires, 125
 Now move a Cyclops, now a nimble Faun.

I'd rather trill a simple, artless song,
 Pleasing myself at home, unknown to fame,

115 Horace represents the poet's desk under the figure of Vesta's sanctuary, into which none but her priest were privileged to enter. The verses, which he has unwillingly suppressed, are here preserved, for no eyes but his own.

116 A. P. l. 70—72.

127 O. II. 16. l. 38.

Than spout and snarl abroad. At Argos once,
 A man believed he sat in theatres, 130
 Listening applausive to unreal plays;
 In all things else a model of good sense:
 A courteous neighbour, amiable host,
 Kind to his wife, indulgent to his slaves,
 Not furious at a flask of wine unseal'd, 135
 Nor giddy near a cliff or open well.
 When he, by kinsmen's aid and hellebore
 Of this delusion cured, regain'd his wits,
 He cried: My friends, your cure is worse than death;
 The only solace of my life is gone, 140
 And all my realm of fancy is a blank.

To beardless boys resign the frolic vein;
 We should have done with trifles and be wise;
 Not string mere words to suit a Latin song,

141 Sir Henry Halford furnishes a parallel story (Essays, p. 61): 'One case, that of the gentleman of Argos, whose delusion led him to suppose that he was attending the representation of a play as he sat in his bed-chamber, is so exact, that I saw a person of exalted rank (George III.) under these very circumstances of delusion, and heard him call upon Mr Garrick to exert himself in the performance of Hamlet.' MACLEANE'S *Horace*.

But harmonize the actions of our life. 145
 Wherefore, I often reason with myself:
 If no amount of water quench'd your thirst,
 You'd take advice: if having wealth to spare
 Makes you more greedy, will you own to that?
 If herbs and simples fail'd to cure your wound, 150
 From herbs and simples you would turn away
 As profitless: but if you heard that wealth
 Was nature's grand specific for a fool,
 Although you grew no wiser than before
 You'd think there's something in the theory; 155
 And if your money really made you wise,
 Less timid or less jealous, you might blush
 Were any man more greedy than yourself.

If that is his who pays the price of it,
 And use, as lawyers say, confers a right, 160
 Yours is the land that feeds you. Orbius' hinds
 Are yours in fact: you put your money down,
 And in return have pullets, eggs and wine;
 So, by degrees, you purchase an estate
 Cheap at three hundred thousand sesterces. 165

You may pay by instalments or at once:
 He who bought land at Veii long ago
 Sups on bought garden-produce unaware,
 And with bought logs at night-fall heats his stove;
 Yet calls all his up to the poplar there, 170
 His limit and his neighbour's; just as if
 That were his own which in a fleeting hour,
 By force, entreaty, purchase or decease,
 Passing to other hands, knows him no more.
 Thus, since none hold in perpetuity, 175
 And heir succeeds to heir as wave to wave,
 What profit house and land or province join'd
 To province, when the scythe of death mows down
 Great things and small, and tarries not for gold?
 Gems, ivory, images of Tuscan gods, 180
 Plate, pictures, mantles of Getulian dye,
 Some have not, others would not care to have.

Why, of two brothers, one prefers his ease
 And perfumed bath to Herod's groves of palm,
 The other, rich and busy all day long, 185

With fire and plough reclaims his scrubby fields,
 The Genius who controls man's natal star
 Alone can tell, a god of human kind
 Who shares our joy and grief, and dies with us.
 Freely I take what moderate use requires, 190
 Not over-careful for expectant heirs;
 Yet in my person try to draw the line
 Between the spendthrift and the cheerful liver,
 Between frugality and avarice.
 Unwise as he who scattereth abroad 195
 Is one who spares expense that he may hoard.
 Boy-like enjoy Minerva's five-day feast,
 And catch the passing pleasure on the wing.
 Freedom from squalor granted, what care I
 Whether a galley bears me or a skiff? 200
 I do not run, full-sail, before the breeze,
 Nor strain my tackle, battling with the storm:

199 It has been suggested to me that, in this line, 'modo ut' is a more probable reading than the 'domus' and 'domo' of the MSS. which are avowedly without authority. 'Modo ut' is used in this sense by Cicero, Horace's contemporary. For examples, see *Lexicon Ciceronianum* Nizolii.

The above version and punctuation of the passage are grounded on this suggestion.

In wit, powers, genius, honours, place, estate,
 Below Rome's leading men, above the crowd.

You are no miser; well. Are you exempt 205
 From other vices? Is your bosom free
 From vain ambition, anger, fear of death?
 Do you laugh dreams and magic-tricks to scorn,
 Witches, night-walking ghosts, Thessalian charms?
 Thank Heaven for life prolong'd? Indulge your friends? 210
 Grow kinder, better with increasing years?
 What use to draw but one of many thorns?
 You can't live well?—Room then for those who can!
 You've eaten, drunk, and trifled long enough:
 Time you were off; before the coming race, 215
 More apt for pleasure, thrust you from your stool.

HORACE'S EPISTLE TO THE PISOS,

ON THE

ART OF POETRY.

THE ART OF POETRY.

IF to a human head the painter join'd
A horse's neck and clothed in various plumes
Limbs of strange creatures, till the woman, fair
Above, went tapering to a fish below ;
When ask'd to view it, could you hide your mirth? 5
Just like that picture, Pisos, on my word,
Is many a book, vague as a sick man's dream,
With all assorted notions cramm'd throughout.
Poets and painters equal license claim,
We know it, and we give and take in turn ; 10
But there are bounds to things permissible,
When wild and tame in hopeless jumble mix
And birds with serpents mate, with tigers lambs.
Sometimes, in works professing gravity,
Descriptive passages are introduced 15
To catch the eye : Diana's grove and shrine ;

The lively course of brooks through pleasant fields;
 The river Rhine, the rainbow are patch'd on,
 Quite out of place:—you paint a cypress well,—
 What boots it to a shipwreck'd man who seeks 20
 A votive tablet? If I want an urn,
 Why comes a pitcher as the wheel spins round?—
 Let all be simple and appropriate.

Too many bards are led astray by rules
 Push'd to the extreme: I aim at brevity 25
 And reach the obscure; nerve, power are sacrificed
 To smoothness; grand attempts explode in rant;
 Excess of caution creeps along the ground.
 He who affects originality
 Wild boars in waves and dolphins paints in woods, 30
 Avoids a fault but flounders into vice.
 A certain sculptor, near th' Æmilian school,
 Excell'd in hair and finger-nails, but fail'd
 In pose and due proportion to complete
 His work in bronze. Were I composing aught, 35
 I had as lief go with my nose awry,
 Perfect in eyes and hair, as follow him.

Choose, when you write, a theme within your powers;
 Consider well how much your back can bear,
 What load will break it. Choose your subject thus, 40
 And words in lucid order will not fail.
 This is the charm of order and true art,
 To tell just now what should just now be told,
 And leave the rest to find its proper place.
 Nice to perceive what pleases or offends, 45
 The poet culls his words with anxious care.
 Great praise is his who by some happy turn
 Gives an old phrase new meaning. When he seeks
 Terms that throw light on the dark side of things,
 Such as well-girt Cethegi never heard, 50
 The license, used discreetly, is allow'd.
 Words newly coin'd sometimes acceptance find:
 Pure Grecisms mostly: why should Rome deny
 To Virgil and to Varius what she grants

41 A. P. l. 311.

47 Epp. II. 2. l. 117.

50 In Latin, as in our own language, proper names when used proverbially, as in this line, are commonly given in the plural number. Cethegus was nearly contemporaneous with Cato. His eloquence was so remarkable that Ennius called him 'Suadæ medulla, orator suaviloquenti ore.'

To Plautus and Cæcilius? I myself 55
 Am grudged the small additions I have made,
 While Cato, Ennius, varying modes of speech,
 Enrich'd their mother-tongue: no law restrains
 The currency of words of modern stamp;
 Trees shed and change their leaves from year to year, 60
 So words grow obsolete and out of use
 And modern verbiage takes the place of old.
 Man and man's works decay; Cyclopean walls
 That, harbouring Neptune, shelter'd mighty fleets,
 The barren marsh, where boatmen plied the oar, 65
 Now drain'd and plough'd to feed the cities near,
 Old Tiber's stream, in safer channels led,
 That floods the fields no more, all suffer change,
 Nor less the form and favour of man's speech.
 Much shall revive that now seems dead and gone, 70
 And much now held in honour be forgot,
 If arbitrary usage so decree.

What metre suits the deeds of chiefs and kings
 In doleful war by Homer are we taught:

70 Epp. II. 2. l. 116.

The couplet, tuned to melancholy strains, 75
 Became the sweet exponent of delight.
 Who first in elegiac measure sang
 Critics and book-men are not yet agreed.
 His own iambus arms Archilochus
 In tragic and in comic scenes alike; 80
 No foot so sure, in speech or dialogue,
 To fix attention on the tale it tells.
 The lyric Muse of gods and heroes sings,
 Of victors in the race or boxing-match,
 Of youthful loves, and freedom born of wine. 85

Am I a poet, if my works display
 No plot, no character, no light and shade?
 If, through false shame, I blush to ask advice?
 A comic subject shrinks from tragic verse,
 Ev'n as the supper of Thyestes scorns 90
 The plain familiar style of comedy;
 Each knows its place and acts becomingly.
 But comedy at times uplifts her voice
 When blustering Chremes cracks his angry throat,
 And grief is deep not loud in tragedy. 95

H.

11

Peleus and Telephus, poor banish'd men,
 Lay rant and high bombastic words aside,
 If they would move their audience to tears.
 Players may break no rule yet lack the charm
 That leads the public captive at their will. 100
 We laugh with those that laugh, are moved to tears
 By those who grieve; if you would stir my grief
 Weep first yourself, that I may sympathize.
 Telephus!—Peleus! if your parts are dull
 I'll doze or chuckle. Words of woe become 105
 A sad, and threats an angry countenance,
 Light jests the playful, serious thoughts the grave;
 For nature, by degrees, to circumstance
 Adapts us from within; delights, inflames,
 Or brings us down in sorrow to the earth; 110
 Then makes the tongue the mind's interpreter.
 But if the actor's words belie his state
 Knights and plebeians straightway raise a laugh.
 Distinguish well if God or hero speaks,
 Hot-headed youth or age in judgment ripe, 115
 Exacting matron or time-serving nurse,
 The travell'd merchant or the husbandman,

Colchian or Syrian, Thebes or Argos bred.
 Hold to tradition or new fancies prune:
 When you would put Achilles on the stage, 120
 Quick, prone to anger, sharp, implacable,
 Let him abjure law and appeal to arms;
 Depict Medea fierce, Ino in tears,
 Ixion false, Io wild, Orestes sad.

If you affect and aim at novelties 125
 In plan or character, be most exact
 To keep the whole consistent with itself.
 A plot from common life is hard to work:
 Better divide the Iliad into acts
 Than break up ground unknown and unreclaim'd. 130
 For subjects free to all become your own
 Only if you can leave the beaten track,
 Nor care to follow others, word by word,
 To straits where diffidence or rules of art
 Make progress or retreat impossible. 135
 Nor, as the Cyclic bards of old, begin:
 'I sing of Priam's fate and noble war.'—

128 Epp. II. i. l. 168.

How shall so great a promise be redeem'd?
 The mountain labours and a mouse is born.
 Far wiser he who preludes modestly: 140
 'Sing of the chief, O Muse, who when Troy fell
 The ways of many men and cities learnt.'—
 He brings forth fire from smoke not smoke from fire,
 And marvels thence ensue, Antiphates,
 Scylla, Charybdis and huge Polypheme: 145
 He tells not the return of Diomede
 From Meleager, nor the Trojan war
 From Leda's eggs; looks to the final act,
 Gives hearers credit for intelligence,
 Omitting much that would be tedious, 150
 And feigns so well, commingling false and true,
 That all the parts form a consistent whole.

Hear, now, what I and those around me ask,
 If you would keep us till the curtains rise
 And the chief mask solicits our applause: 155

141 Epp. I. 2. l. 17.

154 That is, until the piece is finished. With us the curtain falls; in a Roman theatre it was raised from below the stage.

You must note well the changes wrought by time,
 The varied temperaments of youth and age.
 The boy who now has learnt articulate speech
 And firmly treads the ground, delights to play
 Among his comrades, quickly stirr'd to rage, 160
 Appeased as quickly, changing with the hour.
 The beardless youth, freed from his pedagogue,
 Loves dogs and horses and the training-ground;
 Wax to the stamp of vice, to counsel deaf,
 Improvident and careless of expense, 165
 Soon weary of the things he most desired.
 With alter'd views the youth to manhood grown
 Seeks wealth, connexion, at preferment aims;
 Backward to do what he may wish undone.
 Old age has many troubles, seeks and finds; 170
 Then, sparing in the use of what it gets,
 Timid and cold, in business inert,
 It halts, looks far ahead, procrastinates;
 Peevish, unsympathetic with the young,
 A tedious panegyrist of the past. 175

168 Ep. I. 1. l. 43—4.

Advancing years much profit bring with them,
 Take much away in passing. An old head
 Fits not young shoulders, nor should boys ape men :
 Each phase of life must play its proper part.

Some deeds we act and others we narrate ; 180
 Words spoken to the ear affect men less
 Than deeds, which the sure witness of the eye
 Brings home to them : yet much that helps the plot,
 Behind the scenes, is loathsome on the stage ;
 More suited for recital than display. 185
 As when Medea puts her sons to death,
 Inhuman Atreus cooks his nephew's flesh,
 Cadmus and Procne change to snake and bird ;
 From such good taste and reason both revolt.
 No piece can hope to have a lengthen'd run 190
 If it falls short of or exceeds five acts.
 Let no god interpose unless the knot
 Demands his aid, nor a fourth person speak.
 With judgment let the Chorus play its part,
 Not unimportant, if between the acts 195
 It leads us on to the catastrophe.

With friendly counsel let it aid the good,
 Curb angry men and cheer the virtuous ;
 Let it applaud the frugal board, extol
 Justice and law and peace with open gates ; 200
 Betray no secrets and entreat the gods
 To quell the mighty and uphold the weak.

Not then, as now, a pipe of trumpet size
 With bronze-gilt joints, but slender, with few stops,
 Accompanied the Chorus, or enticed 205
 A scanty audience to fill the seats,
 When to the booth that served for theatre
 The people, frugal, chaste and modest came.
 But when the empire was enlarged by war
 And wider walls around the city spread, 210
 When men caroused by day as well as night,
 License ran wild in poetry and song ;
 No wonder, when rough holiday-makers, knights
 And senators without distinction met.
 Then posture-masters came in aid of art 215
 Musicians swept the stage with flowing robes.
 New strings were added to the Dorian lyre,

And rhetoric with headlong vehemence
 Burst forth in wisdom and in prophecy
 That seem'd to rival Delphic oracles. 220

Strollers, who first contended for a goat,
 Soon brought the naked Satyr on the stage,
 And play'd rough jokes with humourous gravity;
 That, after sacrifice and flush'd with wine,
 A lawless audience might diversion find. 225
 Yet were it best if clown and Satyr learnt
 So to combine the serious with the gay,
 That gods and heroes, personated well,
 But now array'd in gold and purple robes,
 Descend not presently to tavern-talk 230
 Nor soar from earth to catch at empty clouds.
 Tragedians, thus, impatient of burlesque,
 Like matrons bid to dance on festal days,
 From wanton Satyrs keep themselves apart.
 I would not write, O Pisos, in a style 235
 Coarse and repulsive, such as Satyrs use,
 Nor so emancipate myself from tragic rules,
 That it should matter not if Davus spoke,

Pythias extorted driveling Simo's cash,
 Or grave Silenus taught his pupil-god. 240
 Familiar subjects would I choose, where all
 May hope, yet strive in vain, to follow me,
 So much depends on tact in treating them
 To shew the fairer side of common life.
 I warn the woodland Satyrs to beware 245
 Of taking up the part of city-men,
 Or singing ditties like a love-sick swain,
 Just as of using low, unseemly words.
 The knights, the senators, the men of wealth,
 Differing from those who munch chickpease and nuts, 250
 Bestow their praise and laurels elsewhere.

Long vowels after short th' iambus form;
 A quick foot; whence the title trimeter
 Clung to iambics, though they had six beats
 From first to last alike: not so far back, 255
 To strike the ear with more of gravity,

240 According to some authors, Silenus was a philosopher, who accompanied Bacchus in his Indian expedition, and assisted him by the soundness of his counsels.

Staid spondees were adopted in the line,
 Kindly, but with each even place reserved.
 This foot, so rare in Accius' noble verse,
 Crushes with over-weight the trimeters 260
 Of Ennius, put crudely on the stage,
 Either from hasty writing, want of care,
 Or, worst of all, from ignorance of art;
 Not every critic's ear can judge of rhythm,
 And Roman poets are too much indulged. 265
 Should I, on this account, take liberties?
 Or think, with all my faults exposed to view,
 To go scot-free? Yet so, avoiding blame
 I earn no praise. Keep ever in your mind
 The finish'd excellence of Grecian art. 270
 But you will say: Our fathers praised the wit
 And verse of Plautus.—Yes, the more fools they,
 In either case, if only I and you
 Rightly distinguish wit from scurril jokes
 And count by thumb and ear a perfect verse. 275

Thespis, 'tis said, endow'd the Tragic Muse
 With pieces, sung and acted on a wain,

By men who smear'd their cheeks with lees of wine.
 Then Æschylus brought in the mask and robe;
 And platforms, slightly raised before the scene, 280
 Gave grace and dignity to speech and gait.
 Much praised Old Comedy succeeded these;
 But freedom grew to license, till the law
 By statute intervened, and so the Choir
 Was basely silent, of its sting deprived. 285
 Our writers left no style of art untried:
 In this most honour'd, that they dared to quit
 The tracks of Greece for scenes of Roman life,
 Whether in tragedy or comedy.
 Nor would brave Latium more excel in arms 290
 Than letters, but that all our poets grudge
 Their time and toil to polish. O ye sons
 Of Numa, give no countenance to works
 That many days and much erasure lack
 Before the nail their perfect finish proves. 295

285 Sat. II. i. l. 82; Epp. II. i. l. 152.

291 A. P. l. 409.

295 This expression is taken from the craft of the sculptor, who tries the surface of his statue by passing the nail over it.

Because Democritus to slavish art
 Preferring genius, bars from Helicon
 Good sense, the many go with nails and beard
 Untrimm'd, in corners hide, and shun the baths.
 His be the poet's crown who never bows 300
 To barber Licinus a madlike head,
 By three Anticyras incurable!
 Oh, foolish I! who purge my bile in spring!
 But for that fault no poems were like mine.
 It matters not; the whetstone will I be 305
 That cuts not, but can put an edge on steel;
 I'll teach the trade but traffic not myself;
 Shew where materials, culture may be found;
 The fit, th' unfit; where art, where bungling leads.
 Sound learning is the parent of good style: 310
 Let the Socratic school provide the sense
 And words will come prepared to set it forth.
 Who knows his debt to friends and native land,
 What love a parent, brother, guest may claim,
 The duties of a senator or judge, 315

The qualities that make a general,
 He can assign to every man his part;
 Let writers study human character
 So all shall speak in terms appropriate.
 Doubt not a piece, with telling hits on men 320
 And manners, lacking beauty, weight and art,
 Delights the people and attracts them more
 Than polished trifles void of incident.

The Muse gave genius and rich forms of speech
 To Greeks, whose only greed was greed of praise: 325
 The boys of Rome learn to divide an *as*
 By hundredths. Thus, son of Albinus, say:—
 Take one ounce from a quincunx, what remains?
 You ought to know.—A third-*as*.—Very well;
 You'll do: Now add an ounce,—it makes?—A half-*as*. 330
 Rust-eaten with such care for pelf, shall these
 Dream of a poem that deserves an edge
 Of cedrine oil or case of cypress-wood.
 The poet either pleases or instructs;
 Some few instruction with amusement blend: 335
 Whatever else, be brief. That docile minds
 May catch your meaning and retain it well,

Pour in no more than the full mind will hold.
 If a narration would be well-received
 Let it not outrage probability, 340
 Nor draw the live child Lamia feasted on.
 Profitless works the tribal elders scorn,
 High Ramnes puts austerities aside;
 He gains all votes who blends the true and sweet,
 And charms the reader he admonishes. 345
 Such books bring wealth to Sosius, cross the sea,
 And make their writer's name for ever famous.

Yet some defects we willingly condone;
 The string at times eludes the hand and mind
 And when they ask a flat returns a sharp; 350
 Nor does the arrow always hit the mark.
 Where most is beautiful I will not carp
 At some few blemishes, which want of care
 Or human weakness leaves. What say we, then?
 As is a scribe past hope, who, warn'd, repeats 355
 The same fault daily, and the harper mock'd
 Who always stumbles on the same false chord,

To me the sloven becomes a Choeribus
 Whom twice or thrice I laugh with and admire;
 And yet am angry if good Homer nods, 360
 Forgetting that long works require repose.
 With poems as with pictures some appear
 To most advantage near, some further off,
 This should be seen in shadow, that in light,
 Prepared to meet the critic's subtle eye: 365
 That pleased at once, this ten times seen will please.

O elder Piso, with your own good sense
 And father's voice for guide, bear this in mind:
 There are degrees of merit in some things.
 Although the common run of advocates 370
 Plead not with all Messala's eloquence
 Or the vast knowledge of Cascellius Aulus
 They pass: but mediocrity in verse
 Nor gods, nor men, nor book-stalls can endure.
 As in rich banquets music out of tune, 375
 Thick unguents, poppies with coarse honey mixt,
 Offend, because the supper needs them not,

So poems, written to delight the mind,
 Just failing of the best approach the worst.
 A youth, untrain'd, eschews Circensian games, 380
 Handles not spear or disc or Grecian hoop,
 Lest the throng'd benches laugh without restraint.
 Yet one, untaught, will write in verse. Why not?
 He's free to please himself, well-born, a knight,
 Rated as such, and leads a virtuous life. 385
 Speak not, act not, against Minerva's will;
 Wise and judicious, whatsoe'er you write
 Reserve it all for Mecius Talpa's ear,
 Your father's, mine; and keep your parchments back
 For thrice three years, to blot them and correct: 390
 A phrase once publish'd cannot be revised.

Orpheus, interpreter of gods to men,
 Turn'd them from savagery and ghastly food,
 Thence said to tame the lion's, tiger's rage.
 Amphion, builder of the Theban wall, 395

388 Spurius Mecius Talpa was appointed licenser of plays by Cn. Pompeius; an office which he must have held for many years. He was considered a learned and severe critic, and his judgments were received with general deference. Cruquius' *Old Commentator*.

395 O. III. II. L. 2.

Led captive stones, by lyre and tuneful voice,
 Whither he would.

The wise of old discern'd
 Public from private, sacred from profane,
 Restrain'd concubinage, gave husbands power,
 Built towns, enacted laws on wood engraved; 400
 Thus name and fame to poets and to song
 Accrued. Then Homer and Tyrtæus roused
 The minds of men to warlike deeds by song;
 Oracles, rules of life were writ in verse.
 Poets found favour in the sight of kings, 405
 The drama rose out of the vintage-feast:
 Be not too shame-faced then to court the Muse
 Who strikes the lyre when great Apollo sings.

Some question whether art or nature most
 Avails in poetry, I hold to both. 410
 Art heightens genius, genius works by art,
 Each aiding each to perfect the result.
 He who would reach the goal and win the race
 Toil'd much, bore much in youth from heat and cold,

410 A. P. 290, seqq.

Abstain'd from love and wine; the Pythian bard 415
 Studied at first and fear'd a master's frown.
 'Tis not enough to say: My poem's good,
 A murrain take the hindmost in the race,
 I scorn to be the last, or to confess
 My ignorance of what I never learnt. 420

As auctioneers incite a crowd to bid,
 So poets, rich in lands and monies placed,
 Invite the venal praise of flatterers.
 If one can entertain luxuriously,
 Bail a defaulter, bolster up a cause, 425
 How shall he know a true friend from a false?
 When you have given or promised gifts to any,
 Trust him not in his joy to judge your work;
 What should he say, but—well! true! neatly put!—
 Pore over it, and from his friendly eyes 430
 Drop tears, or leap and beat the ground with his foot?
 As hirelings at a funeral weep and act
 And rant far more than one who grieves at heart,
 So flattery makes more noise than honest praise.
 Kings, it is said, with wine elicit truth, 435
 And try with many cups what guests deserve

Their friendship. When you take a song in hand,
 Remember how the fox beguiled the crow.
 Quintilius, in like case, would say: Amend
 This, that; and if you vow'd that you had striv'n 440
 In vain to mend it, bid you cast it out
 And new material on the anvil forge:
 If you upheld and justified a fault,
 He took no further trouble, leaving you
 Without a rival in your own self-love. 445
 The critic blames a harsh, ill-fashion'd verse,
 Draws a black line across a barbarous phrase,
 Prunes with firm hand ambitious ornament,
 Bids you throw light on passages obscure,
 Notes for correction an ambiguous word: 450
 An Aristarchus he, who says not: Why
 Annoy a friend in trifles?—Trifles oft
 Ensnare and bring the trifler to disgrace.

Wise men avoid a crazy poet's touch
 As though he had the jaundice or the itch,
 Had anger'd Dian, or wrought sacrilege; 455

But packs of heedless boys are at his heels.
 And while he strays and spouts, with head erect,
 If like a bird-catcher intent on game
 He stumbles headlong in a well, and cries :— 460
 Help, citizens !—let no man stir a foot ;
 For should one bear a hand, let down a rope,
 How know you but he fell designedly
 And wants no aid ? The bard of Sicily
 Will point my moral : sage Empedocles 465
 To prove his godhead into Ætna leap'd.
 Poets have vested rights in suicide,
 To save one 'gainst his will is felony.
 Rescued, he tries again ; lacks common sense
 To see the folly of dramatic deaths. 470
 What drove him into verse ? He must have foul'd
 His father's grave or lightning-stricken ground.
 One thing is clear, he's mad ; and, like a bear,
 If he could burst the strong bars of his cage,
 Learn'd and unlearn'd were scatter'd at his voice ; 475
 Whomso he caught he'd hug and sing to death ;
 A leech that keeps his hold till gorged with blood.



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